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ABSTRACT

Noting that the nearly 1,400 two-year colleges in the United States enroll almost half of all students in higher education, this collection of essays discusses the students, the curriculum, and the faculty at these colleges. In essence, the collection surveys what is "on the minds" of two-year college English teachers. The essays and their authors are: (1) "Introduction" (Mark Reynolds); (2) "I Am Not the Look in Your Eyes" (Janice M. Albert); (3) "This New Breed of College Students" (Mary L. Needham); (4) "'The Old Lady in the Student Lounge': Integrating the Adult Female Student into the College Classroom" (Mary Kay Morrison); (5) "What Happened to Darleen? Reconstructing the Life and Schooling of an Underprepared Learner" (Smokey Wilson); (6) "Latina/o College Writing Students: Linguistic, Cultural, and Gender Issues" (Kate Mangelsdorf); (7) "Aliteracy among Community College Students" (Raelyn Augustin Joyce); (8) "Today for Tomorrow: Program and Pedagogy for 21-st Century College Students" (Claudia M. Barrett and Judith A. Wootten); (9) "Writing Everybody In" (Myrna Goldenberg and Barbara Stout); (10) "The Integration Project: A Model for Curriculum Transformation" (Judith Rae Davis and Sandra S. Silverberg); (11) "If at First You Don't Succeed: Effective Strategies for Teaching Composition in the Two-Year College" (Ellen Andrews Knodt); (12) "A Quarter Century and Beyond: My Story of Teaching Technical Communication" (Nell Ann Pickett); (13) "Honors English in the Two-Year Colleges" (Jean Bolen Bridges); (14) "Writing in Cyberspace: Communication, Community, and the Electronic Network" (Mark C. Harris and Jeff Hooks); (15) "Community College Teaching: Endless Possibilities" (Al Starr); (16) "The Future Community College Instructor as a Business Executive" (Karen Hodges); (17) "Renewed Vitality in the 21st Century: The Partnership between Two-Year College and University English Departments" (Bertie E. Fearing); (18) "(Re)Viewing Faculty Preservice Training and Development (Keith Kroll); and (19) "Scholarship and Teaching: Crafting the Art" (George B. Vaughan). (NKA)

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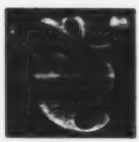
Two-Year College English

Essays for a New Century



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Edited by
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Two-Year College English

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Two-Year College English

Essays for a New Century

Edited by
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1111 W. Kenyon Road, Urbana, Illinois 61801-1096

For Jane Christensen, and for two-year college English professionals everywhere—

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Preface

The need for a new book on two-year college English was first recognized by Jane Christensen, then deputy executive director of the National Council of Teachers of English, who shares in this book's dedication. Jane was deeply interested in and committed to two-year college English teachers. In January 1990, she wrote a letter to Chuck Annal, chair of the National Two-Year College Council (NTCC) of the Conference on College Composition and Communication, pointing out the need for a new publication on two-year college English. Jane suggested updating Walker Gibson's 1979 essay collection *New Students in Two-Year Colleges* (NCTE), and mentioned to Chuck that I was someone who might be considered for editor. Chuck took the idea to NTCC in March 1990. That group approved sponsorship of a collection of essays on two-year college English and asked Chuck to proceed with plans for the project, which he asked me to undertake in the spring of 1990.

I began work that spring by talking with a number of people around the country to find out what was needed and to seek advice. Most agreed that a book about teaching English in two-year colleges was long overdue and that it should be broader in scope than Gibson's earlier essay collection, which focused on students. All were encouraging about the project. Most offered strong opinions and advice, some of which came from established professional authors. Several insisted that all of the essays had to be "invited" to assure quality and to get what I wanted.

For better or worse, and after considerable thought, I rejected that well-intentioned suggestion. I had much more confidence in two-year college authors, and I wanted to give as many as possible a chance to contribute to the book. To assign every essay and hand pick all the contributors did not seem in keeping with the democratic spirit on which two-year colleges have been built. So I placed an open call for proposals in a number of professional journals and spread the word as widely as possible through other channels over the fall and winter of 1990–91. The call brought in over sixty proposals, with far too many excellent ones for a volume of this size; therefore, I relied on a number

of reviewers to assist me in selecting the proposals to be encouraged. The final decisions were, of course, mine, and they were based upon a number of factors, particularly the need to cover a variety of topics.

Using an open call for proposals meant that I could not control the subjects of the essays, and thus, I did not get essays on some of the subjects I would have liked, most notably part-time faculty, ESL, writing program administration, or assessment. These are important, even problematic, areas within two-year college English, maybe so problematic that no one wanted to tackle them. Therefore, the volume may not meet the expectations of every reader or fulfill all the agendas of those who have anticipated its publication. What has resulted, nonetheless, is a collection that does represent much of what is currently on the minds of two-year college English teachers, and one, I hope, that partially fills that gap in the literature recognized by Jane Christensen and NTCC members in 1990. It does, I trust, accurately demonstrate some of the best thinking now occurring in our institutions. And whatever readers find missing may provide direction for other authors and future volumes.

I make no apologies for the decidedly positive tone of most of these essays. Two-year colleges are not immune to the problems facing all of higher education: decreased funding, the overuse—even abuse—of part-time faculty, the heavy work loads of many full-time faculty, the increasing demands to keep up with the new technology, among others. That this collection is basically optimistic reflects, I think, a general sense of satisfaction with what is taking place within two-year college English nationwide.

Two-year college English teachers are part of a vast mosaic; each has a story of his or her own, the telling of which will both agree and disagree with various conclusions in this volume. No single collection of essays could ever reproduce the vast and complex mural that is two-year college English teaching. Yet this book does sketch some of the activity now taking place in two-year college English departments and suggests what the future may hold for them. My hope is that this collection provides readers with new and significant information about two-year college English, that it stimulates discussion about the role and scope of two-year English, and that it suggests areas for further research.

I owe much gratitude to many people for their help with this book; first, to those who helped me review initial proposals, Chuck Annal, Paul Bodmer, Jean Bridges, Sylvia Holladay, Ellen Knodt, Jane Peterson, Nell Ann Pickett, and Mary Slayter; for other review help, Jane Peterson, Audrey Roth, Robert Wylie, Mike Anzaldúa, and Hugh

Burns; for encouragement and good advice, Don McQuade, Lynn Troyka, Helon Raines, and Michael Spooner; for encouragement and help with an elusive source, Bertie Fearing; for his enthusiastic support and excellent editing, Robert A. Heister; for their hard work, dedication, and willingness to revise when asked, the contributors; and, as always, for their love, their support, and their uncanny ability to shift my focus instantly from the profession to the family, thank you, Karen and Greg.

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1 Introduction

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Since their beginnings in the early 1900s, two-year colleges have become an American educational phenomenon. Although the first two-year colleges were established over ninety years ago, most have opened only in the last thirty years. Their number now totals nearly 1 400 public and private institutions, enrolling nearly six million students—about 45 percent of all students in higher education and almost 55 percent of all first-time students. A community college is normally within commuting distance of over 90 percent of the U.S. population, and at least one can be found in every congressional district (Adelman, 1992, p. 1; Doucette & Roueche, 1991, p. 1).

The growth and popularity of two-year colleges have been amazing. Most two-year college enrollments have continued to increase when many four-year institutions have experienced stable or declining enrollments. The most recent projections by the U.S. Department of Education indicate that two-year colleges will grow by another one million students in the upcoming decade, suggesting that these institutions will continue to play a major role in higher education well into the twenty-first century.

Most two-year colleges provide the first two years of the traditional four years of postsecondary education, or they provide technical and professional training in a variety of fields, or they do both. Most also offer a wide variety of educational opportunities and services to their local communities. But these institutions can assume vastly different characters: they range from tribal community colleges on the reservations of Native Americans to aviation schools that train workers for the aeronautics industry; from small single-campus rural schools to vast, multicampus urban complexes; from private schools affiliated with a particular religion to branch campuses of major state university

systems. And they may be designated "community," "junior," "technical," or simply "college."

No collection of essays could possibly cover the heterogeneity of two-year institutions and their English offerings. What this collection does is to give a glimpse of this diversity by focusing on English programs—their students, curricula, and faculty. The volume's purpose is to educate those who know little about two-year college English studies, to report to those within these institutions about the activities taking place in others, to suggest what the future holds for two-year college English, and to point out areas for future research.

At most two-year colleges, a variety of English courses and programs corresponds to student needs: varied levels of basic writing and reading to help the underprepared learner and the at-risk student, along with special programs and courses to assist the nontraditional college student. The traditional curriculum remains freshman composition for transfer students; courses in advanced composition and various honors English courses; technical and business writing for professional students and those in associate degree programs; literature courses for transfer students and for those wanting enrichment; and other courses such as creative writing, film, drama, and journalism, often taught by members of the English faculty.

The first section of essays in this collection focuses on students. Two-year college students are highly reflective of society at large. Besides enrolling the usual eighteen-year-old high school graduates, most colleges have open-door policies that admit anyone who applies with a high school diploma or a certificate of high school equivalency. For those without diplomas, many offer high school preparation through adult basic education programs; most graduates of such programs subsequently enroll in the two-year college. Increasingly, these institutions will be the major source of higher education for adult students: high school dropouts, the recently unemployed, those upgrading knowledge and skills, career-change candidates, or senior citizens looking for leisure-time activities. The essays in this section discuss some of these students and some of the English programs appropriate for them.

Janice Albert opens the first section with a personal account of students she has encountered in her teaching career. She reveals how her work with such students in a community college often differs from that of her colleagues in four-year colleges and universities. Mary Needham next profiles three types of students from the multiplicity found routinely on two-year college campuses. She gives readers a composite look at these students and suggests the kinds of English

instruction that works best for them. In the third essay, Mary Kay Morrison examines the adult female student, drawing on a survey of students and teachers on a multicampus, midwestern community college. Next, in a discussion of the underprepared, minority adult learner, Smokey Wilson provides a case study that demonstrates the possibilities and promises of open admissions. Kate Mangelsdorf follows, discussing Latina/o students, who represent the fastest growing minority group in the nation, and their particular problems in English classes. In the final essay of this section, Raelyn Joyce examines the concept of aliteracy among students and suggests ways in which teachers can deal with students' disinterest in reading.

The essays in the second section address curricular issues in two-year colleges. These issues include collegewide curriculum transformation projects, comprehensive programs for the underprepared student, the teaching of writing, honors English, and computer technology. With their emphasis on teaching and their variety of students, two-year colleges should be leaders in curriculum change. The essays in this section demonstrate that such change is taking place.

Claudia Barrett and Judith Wootten lead off with a report on a successful interdisciplinary program for underprepared students during the freshman year. They demonstrate how such programs can cut across disciplines, and they conclude that programs like theirs may well be necessary to prepare future generations of underprepared students for successful college work. Next come two reports of collegewide curriculum transformation projects. In the first of these, Myrna Goldenberg and Barbara Stout recount a large-scale curriculum overhaul in a Maryland community college and show how English and other disciplines can adapt to mirror changes in societal values and issues. Judith Rae Davis and Sandra Silverberg then describe a curriculum transformation project at Bergen Community College in New Jersey that grew out of an extensive faculty professional development plan. They detail a redesigned developmental English and freshman composition program focused on gender, race, ethnicity, and class.

In the next essay, Ellen Knodt provides an overview of recent composition research of especial value in the two-year college. She begins with a selective examination of current research, indicating which strategies should prove most valuable to two-year college teachers, and then suggests additional research in composition particularly suited to two-year college teachers.

Other than basic writing and freshman composition, technical writing is probably the most frequently taught form of composing on

two-year college campuses. In a personal account of her career in teaching technical writing, Nell Ann Pickett provides a significant historical retrospective on this area and suggests its future direction. Next, Jean Bridges gives an overview of honors English in two-year colleges, showing that these schools often attract superior students and provide superior opportunities for them. In the last essay of this section, Mark Harris and Jeff Hooks discuss the effects of electronic information systems on the curriculum. They define the new electronic language of "cyberspace," argue for the conversation as the appropriate rhetorical model for expository writing, and suggest how electronic information networks will influence English studies.

The final group of essays focuses on two-year college faculty. Specifically, the authors discuss what it is like to teach English in a two-year college: the opportunities, the rewards, and the problems. They address faculty preparation, both preservice and in-service, and faculty scholarship and research.

Al Starr begins this section with his "teaching autobiography," revealing through his story the opportunities available to two-year college teachers. He concludes with suggestions for training future faculty. In the next essay, Karen Hodges previews the look of two-year colleges entering the twenty-first century and the English faculty needed to staff them.

Next, Bertie Fearing reviews two-year college English teacher training and predicts increased partnerships between two-year colleges and universities in the next century. Keith Kroll follows with a report on past studies of two-year college faculties and details preservice and in-service training for future instructors. He urges a new role for faculty as teacher-researchers. Offering support for Kroll's call that two-year college teachers must become knowledge makers based in classroom experiences, George Vaughan, in the final essay of this section, calls upon administrators and faculty to view the teacher as a scholar and to emphasize scholarship as a stimulus and enhancement to good teaching.

Collectively, these essays suggest a promising future for two-year college English teaching. They suggest continued variety in students, curriculum, and faculty, mirroring the society the colleges serve. Perhaps most important, these essays give evidence of a high level of professionalism in two-year college English studies as they show teachers scrutinizing major issues affecting their work. As most of the essays indicate, both two-year colleges and their English programs will continue to make significant contributions in their second century.

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I Students

2 I Am Not the Look in Your Eyes

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In an English class that has been meeting for two weeks, I am listening to students read their papers aloud to each other in small groups. One young man dressed in a brown leather jacket mispronounces words in a particular way; he occasionally omits final consonants, especially *t*'s and *d*'s. Looking at his typewritten paper, I see that he has omitted the letters representing these sounds. Are these spelling errors?

I ask him to stay a few minutes after class. "Do you hear these sounds?" I ask. "When I say 'Ice cream will melt in the sun,' do you hear the *t* in *melt*?" I explode the *t*. He flashes me a look that stings like a paper cut. "I hear everything," he snaps. "Just give me my grade."

I'm stunned by his rejection and immediately sorry to have been so blunt. During the rest of the term, I am careful about speaking directly to the class; I face the students squarely and do not "talk to the blackboard." I stand close to his seat in the first row. In this way, I'm almost sure that he can hear me. We never again address the subject of his possible hearing loss.

I recall another scene during the first day of a new term: the class is just getting down to business when the door opens and three young men enter. Good looking and deeply suntanned, they wear tank tops showing well-developed arms and shoulders. Shakespeare would have called them "sinewy." One of them is carrying a paper bag from Burger King, and the room suddenly fills with the luscious fragrance of grilled beef and fried potatoes. "I'm sorry, you'll have to take that out," I say. All three young men get up and leave. They do not return that hour.

The author wishes to thank Professor Constance Cronin, who critiqued this essay with integrity and *veritas*.

I

Recently I was invited to a reunion of college friends, all Ph.D.s, either full or associate professors somewhere. Some are talking of retirement. One has started a textbook publishing company.

They look down on me. It's true. Their patronizing gazes mutely ask, "What happened?" The idea is that I *might* have had a brilliant career. I have tried to get them to say "community college," but it always comes out "junior."

They like to talk about how badly prepared their graduate students are, dwelling on the incredible insult of spelling errors. One woman pouts, "It's gotten so bad, I have stopped assigning papers altogether." She lights up a cigarette that she rolled herself from paper and loose tobacco, stashed in a tin that carries no warning label. The aroma is tantalizing. Cowed by her words, her arrogance, and the respect she commands, I pass her an ashtray.

In a group of my "equals," I would talk about Tim, who had been on my mind lately. Tim is nearly blind. One eye focuses weakly; the other rolls blankly in a random orbit. He refuses to hide this sight behind dark glasses. When he needs to read, he takes out glasses with magnification in one spot and, bending over the book until his nose almost touches the page, he reads perfectly—Didion, Hawthorne, Shakespeare. Though he tires faster than the other students, he is a flawless reader.

And he is loud, almost obnoxious in class—another disruptive blind student. When I was in graduate school, preparing to be a teacher, full of Bernard Shaw and Henry James, I never thought about blind students at all. My idea of the "handicapped" was based on *The Miracle Worker*. Now I am in a room with a blind student who "pops off" every little while. At the age of twenty, Tim lacks Helen Keller's juvenile charm, and he is not my only student.

But that week, instead of being irritated with him, I had tried an experiment—greeting him by name. "Tim, how are you today?"—just a word or two to say "I see you." My guess has been that, seeing so little himself, he fears he may not be seen by us. He may feel reassured when his needling talk provokes our responses.

I would talk this over with my friends, but no one is interested. They are comparing their impatience with the very students I long to teach—the National Merit Scholars, the yearbook editors, the top 10 percent of the state's high school graduates. One woman, a Fulbright veteran, is agreeing with the woman who no longer assigns papers. "They don't care—why should I care?"

Perhaps I could get them to listen to the story of Janet Jameson, the daughter of my best friend. Years ago, she enrolled in my 8 a.m. composition class, but she was absent most of the time. I agreed to meet her at 7:30 a.m. to help her catch up. Looking over her work while I waited, I noticed how lifeless it was. There was nothing of Janet in this writing—or in my office, either. By 8 a.m., I realized that she had stood me up. I went to class feeling cranky.

I had really wanted to succeed with this young woman, but Janet was someone who didn't want to learn what I had to offer. I confronted her at the first opportunity: "Janet, you are on the verge of failing this class. This is the last day to save your GPA by taking a W. Just go over to Admissions and Records (I pointed north) and tell them you are dropping. I repeat: This is the last day."

From my vantage point, I could see her leave the building, turn south, and head out to the parking lot. Incredibly, she got into her car and drove away. "They don't care." Surely these party people would listen to Janet's story. But did I want to feed their cynicism by telling it?

Being ignored confers a certain freedom. Nursing my second glass of wine, I reflected on another side of my career. For example, the evening I spotted Rick Willets behind the counter of a fish and chips place. Rick had taken the entire composition sequence from me and transferred to the state college. He seemed to be capable of something more consequential than operating a deep-fat fryer in the mall. Still, I went over to say hello. "How do you like working here?" I asked, feigning cheerfulness. He smiled broadly. "It's great! I love it! I own three of these places now." For once, I was glad to have been wrong.

Sylvia Cardinelli was my first student on drugs. I didn't know it at the time. What I observed was a young woman who seemed to be falling asleep in the second row, every other day. I learned that she was attending the community college under doctor's orders as an extension of her therapy, following her release from one of the state psychiatric hospitals. She was under prescription medication that must have been terribly strong—some days she could barely recognize the sound of her own name.

Many years later I met her on the streets of Berkeley, supervising a group of youngsters in her work as a counselor for emotionally disturbed children. Her hair was shot with grey, but her look was calm and steady. One could see that she had crossed her valley of shadows and was safely on the other side.

Sylvia's work would have been easy to ridicule when she was just out of the hospital. Most of my colleagues don't ridicule their students,

even when the errors of innocence tap sharply on our funny bones—"Sorry I missed your lecture on *Odiferous Rex*." In a full-blown complaint session, my teaching peers would win hands down over my professor friends, but what would be the point? In general, we have all come to accept the fact that what we do is generally misunderstood by the academy.

II

We, in the world of higher education, know that two-year college faculty are paid to teach and that university people, generally, are not—they are paid to advance the frontiers of knowledge through research. They will invite some few, highly trained students into the world of serious scholarship, but their universities will not ask too many questions about how those few got to be highly trained. Despite recent calls in higher education journals for renewed attention to teaching, I believe it is accurate to say that most universities still do not value teaching on their own campuses or anywhere else. Evidence of the devaluation of teaching is seen in the refusal of most universities to reward work in composition and rhetoric in tenure and promotion decisions. Rhetoric, the medium of scholarship, is thought not to be scholarly. The academy has found a way to separate the dancer from the dance.

Furthermore, the advantage to the university of published research seems to be mainly financial. Our university colleagues are valued especially when their publications bring income to the university through grants and favorable publicity that makes the community want to donate money, buildings, and artifacts to the institution. My professor friends are painfully aware that their university administrations seem, primarily, to be in the fundraising business.

In California, the state legislature rewards the university system far more generously than it does the community college system. Each newly admitted undergraduate brings $16,000 to the university, but only $7,500 to a state college and a mere $3,000 to a community college. At any branch of the university, this student will enjoy a physical plant that is funded at a different rate than at the community college. A square foot of new building costs about twenty times more on any campus of the University of California system than on a two-year college campus. These are the economics of status.

Accepting their privileges without critical examination has led many of our university counterparts to behave with unconscious arrogance. For example, my department once received a letter from the English faculty at the University of California at Berkeley proposing an exchange of staff. We were being invited to participate as instructors in "Subject A," the remedial English class. In exchange, our college would receive the services of UC graduate students. Such a proposal suggests that the University of California cannot tell the difference between its own graduate students and veteran composition instructors who have held graduate degrees for ten to twenty years. These university faculty, along with my professor friends, are victims of a system that does not reward them for teaching, so they are passing along an attitude of teaching's low esteem to people who hold a different point of view.

III

My colleagues and I know that the first-year curriculum is nearly identical from one institution to the next, but that the manner of presentation can make a big difference to the student. We know we excel at presenting the essentials of composition to freshmen. We can and do pay attention to our students' preparation, as well as their aspirations. We know well the hopes and dreams of older students who fell off the high school assembly line to marry, to earn money, and to find a new vision of themselves.

Asked for our criticism of the two-year college system, many of us would say that the curriculum is too shallow for long-term satisfaction. For most English teachers, there is no second year of instruction. Consequently, most of us have a need for intellectual growth which is unmet by our institutions. Some of us specialize in pedagogic problems—teaching basics to the foreign born or to the slower students. This association stigmatizes us further in the eyes of the university—underprepared students taught by underprepared teachers.

Explaining the dilemma of my career to my university friends might be a good starting point for restoring understanding between us; to do so might soothe my rankled feelings in their presence. But self-esteem is not obtained through the smiles and approval of others. It comes from within by the process of meeting one's own goals in a manner that matches one's own values. I value learning, and I believe

in the ability of ordinary people to educate themselves. My goal in the classroom is to give higher education a human face.

Consequently, I am proud to discover "The Student" in an unlikely person, someone such as Darryl Rivera, one of the young men who brought his lunch to English class on that first day.

IV

The day after they left to enjoy their hot Burger King lunch, the three young men, Darryl Rivera, Ed Quintero, and Leon Saunders, returned to class. They came to class every day for weeks, and they always caused a disturbance. Their work was poor. Enrolled in a self-paced program, they had no idea of how to manage their own time. Frankly, I was looking for a way to throw them out until I noticed that Darryl had been handing in work. In fact, he had taken and passed the first test.

I kept an eye on Darryl during the next week. While the others pretended to study, wrapping their books around muscle magazines, Darryl completed assignments. Two days out of five, he worked. The other three, he gave in to the group ethic and wasted his time.

Who were these guys? I went underground, to the athletic department. One of the team captains had seen them working out and using the basketball court. He believed they came from "another" part of town, which I translated to mean the Spanish-heritage ghetto. I asked for some help in reaching the three. Everybody agreed to deliver my message.

A few days later, they arrived. I was brief: "I'm very glad to see you. We have to talk about your progress. I'm here to help all of you—don't think that I have any favorites—but actually only one of you is doing any work. That one might pass this class." Ed and Leon both looked at Darryl. "I see you know who I mean. I wish you'd give him a chance."

No problem. In the remaining days, Darryl was escorted to class by his two friends, who waited patiently while he listened to tapes, wrote essays, and took tests. Free of the necessity to conceal their reading, they studied their magazines: photos of highly developed pectorals and glistening physiques; sculpted thighs on which one could actually count the four parts of the quadriceps—they were, after all, enrolled in weight training at the college. While Darryl was tutored by the rest of us, his buddies faithfully kept him company; sometimes they simply sat and stared at their hands. The term ended. After vacation Darryl

came back alone, a big smile on his face. "Hi, Mrs. Albert," he greeted me, wanting me to know that he was re-enrolled and ready to go. This was a great moment for me. I place it in my personal scrapbook next to another incident that makes me smile even now.

I am walking across campus, when a young man wearing a brown leather jacket shouts at me. I recognize, at some distance, the deaf young man who had been so angry. He is gesturing and pointing. "What?" I question, coming close enough to see the grin on his face. "Both ears!" He is pointing at his head, laughing, scarcely able to contain his exhilaration. "Both ears! I hear everything now." Tiny buttons in both ears, his new hearing aids, have called up this joy that he wants to share with me.

Darryl Rivera, Rick, Sylvia, the deaf boy whose name I can't even remember—I put your faces beside those of my educated friends with the big careers. I am not the look in their eyes. Their look is dim beside the light in your faces.

3 This New Breed of College Students

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As a population of learners, today's two-year college students are interesting in ways not envisioned even a few years ago. Their ages run the gamut from the most pink-cheeked, inexperienced youngsters to the most worldly senior citizens. Oftentimes, they've experienced only minimal success in school. Their education may have been curtailed by marriage or by early or unexpected parenthood. They may have faced mounting financial pressures that relegate education to the back burner. But dramatic changes in social and economic conditions have dislodged many old-school traditions, and with these changes a whole new breed of students has arrived at all types of institutions of higher education. These students are pressed for time; they manage a job (often, even two jobs), a home, and a family. The life they build is often tenuous—one illness, extra overtime shift, problem with a secondhand car, or family disagreement can throw their whole world into long-term chaos. Many have experienced recent divorce and feel wounded and torn. Stepchildren and ex-families easily drain their resources of time, money, and talent. Struggling to meet the formidable constraints of time and money, they are frequently stretched wire thin.

By using innovative methods, two-year community colleges, a twentieth-century creation, have carved niches for themselves and come to challenge their four-year counterparts for the respect of America's economic and academic communities.

Instructors who view teaching as a "calling" have always looked within themselves for motivation. They have found fulfillment by empowering their students to reach their highest potentials. Now, however, new generations of students occupying two-year college classrooms are turning them into stimulating places for instructors and students alike. While teachers must still undertake the same arduous preparations to meet the needs of these students, some of the

techniques, methods, and principles in their teaching repertoires demand greater mastery of subject matter but afford more enjoyment for students and instructors. In this essay, I will present a few composites of these unique students and their problems, and I will suggest methods for working successfully with them.

It should be a commonplace of education by now that the fundamental—and unchanging—requisite for any educator is to respect the students and their diverse ways of learning. According to the position statement of the National Council of Instructional Administrators (NCIA), "Student success has always been a dominant article of faith in the community college credo" ("Promoting Student Success," 1991). Instructors must subscribe to a mentor's mission: to empower the students, regardless of age, background, or purpose for being in the class, to leave that class with the ability to handle the subject matter more effectively. Further, instructors must recognize the need to develop exercises and methods suitable for any student meeting the prerequisites for entrance.

Students' reasons for attending college are as varied as the students themselves (Bumgardner, 1991, p. 160; Aslanian, 1991, pp. 58–59). Three major classes of students can be categorized as (1) the highly motivated; (2) those needing mental stimulation; and (3) those seeking a "last chance" to gain an education (Neilsen, 1991, p. 47). Within each group, of course, many variations exist.

The Highly Motivated Student: Pressed by Economics

Students in the first group are usually practical and highly motivated to excel. They frequently overcome tremendous odds in pursuit of an education. Their skills are often minimal, one lesson which has been hammered into their psyches from early childhood (Smilkstein, 1990, p. 2).

Typical of many students in his situation, Joe was embroiled in a bitter confrontation with his promiscuous wife. Their four children were the winner's trophy. In the turmoil of family combat, Joe lost his job. Though he lost both his wife and his employment, he did gain custody of the children. A two-year technical college seemed the quickest way for Joe to gain a marketable skill. Having completed his limited education years before, he required hours of guidance from learning lab assistants just to learn basic English. At first, he needed hours of instructor time, as often for friendship as for academic assis-

tance. He seemed to have little going for him in terms of academic success, except a dogged determination to make a decent life for himself and his children. The many students out there who are like Joe develop amazing sinew and learn to value themselves when given encouragement, faculty contact, and motivation ("Promoting Student Success," 1991). "As we deal with some of these students," Norm Neilson (1991) has observed, "especially those who lack adequate preparation, most of us are trying to provide an environment that facilitates their persistence to the greatest extent" (p. 46).

Also typical of many two-year college students, Janet sensed the whisper of time and technology dangerously close at her heels. Even though her financial situation was not immediately acute, she saw an inevitable crisis ahead, with her husband's rapidly deteriorating lung condition, two preschool children, and only a GED certificate representing her *real* formal education. Nonetheless she plunged headfirst into the several developmental courses that were required after she scored poorly on the Academic Assessment and Placement Program (AAPP) examination. Although coming from a terrifying, incestuous background and having only recently broken free from a long drug addiction, Janet stimulated the class discussions and led the class in grade achievement. Given her own high expectations, the high expectations of the institution, and the respect of the other class members, Janet gained new skills while she emancipated herself from her problems.

Students in this group may be changing to new careers after a company has closed or after they were dismissed in an effort to streamline a business. Like Joe, these students need a skill in some technology as quickly as possible. Many normally turn to two-year colleges, which have assumed the major responsibility for training the nation's technicians. Dale Parnell (1985) observes, "It just may be easier to create an information-age society than to maintain one" (p. 11). Or, more significantly, "as the sector of higher education most closely related to both the national work force and local community, we at the community colleges . . . must serve as models for the rest of the higher education community" (Kappner, 1990–91, p. 18). Two-year colleges will continue to see students like Joe and Janet flock to their campuses over the next two decades.

Increasingly, with pristine high school diplomas in hand, younger students come to two-year colleges seeking a less intimidating school than a four-year college. These students are firmly committed to becoming teachers, lawyers, accountants, and nurses. Here, they become acclimated to the college routine, gain confidence and self-esteem by

completing their goals, and move on to four-year colleges for their degrees (Bumgardner, 1991, p. 160). Gail Mellow (1991) makes an emphatic plea for appropriate transfer agreements to accommodate such students: "We owe it to ourselves and to our students to develop a transfer process suitable for the 21st century" (A-52).

H. Ramsey Fowler (1991) contends that "the nation's colleges and universities will have to break out of the traditional mold of education: the idea that students enter college at eighteen and graduate four years later" (A-20). But avoiding that mental pitfall is not enough. Carol McAuliffe (1991), assistant dean of Business, Industry and Government at State Technical Institute at Memphis and president of the Tennessee Alliance for Continuing and Higher Education, underscores the need for innovative measures in higher education. She observes:

> The idea of lifelong learning is still very new. But colleges are becoming more and more aware of who the customer is. . . . For so long we decided what the [students] needed to know and when they'd learn it. But we need to do better than that now. . . . (A-20)

Clifford Adelman (1988) echoes the same sentiment: "The concepts of 'lock-step' two- and four-year degrees are seriously deficient" (p. 40).

The two Jims, both in their early twenties, were unstoppable after their first encounter with the power of language. Although resistant at first, Jim No. 1 became an avid reader of Dostoevsky, Faulkner, Camus, and other classics, and was marvelous during class discussions. Like Janet, Jim No. 2 was climbing out of a drug pit; he found his "cure" in a deep involvement with his ability to express himself in public, something he used to fulfill a longing for self-respect. Such motivated students, while meeting their self-appointed goals, encourage others in their classes, instructors and students alike.

The Model Student: Intellectually Starved

Students in this second group are ideal: they come to college for intellectual stimulation. Often as knowledgeable as their instructors, they possess a world of experience in fields their instructors may have yet to explore. For example, some students program computers and use the latest technologies on a daily basis, an area of endeavor many instructors simply have no time to consider. Already lovers of learning and usually avid readers and competent writers, these students want the exhilaration that comes from exchanging their ideas with their classmates and instructors. According to the 1990 census, at least one

quarter of the college students today are over thirty years old, most of whom have unique life experiences to bring to the classroom.

Many are mothers who have chosen to teach their children at home. Marjorie, for example, felt that her bright, inquisitive children were confined in a lockstep class with no opportunity to express themselves. Her solution was to polish her own skills in order to teach her children to think. "Students [and many of their parents] all know that it's not just a question of learning the right answers, but of finding the right questions to ask," states Robin Dorff (1991, C-4), a professor of political science at the University of North Carolina.

Collecting the first assignment from my freshman class at the federal prison, I was stunned by the quality of Pence's paper. The essay was well organized, innovative in language use, carefully supported with appropriate examples reflecting a well-read person, and was, without a doubt, the best paper I have received in my twenty-five years of teaching English. Rumor had it that Pence was a doctor who had tangled with the IRS and lost. For an intelligent, highly educated individual like Pence, the isolation among largely uneducated people, with whom he had little in common, was stifling. While he could have waived the class for the degree he was pursuing, he chose instead the stimulation of a professor and motivated classmates.

Quinn was stymied at a very young age in a humdrum position with little chance for promotion during the rest of her working career. Finding herself overlooked again and again for promotion in favor of younger colleagues, she was "encouraged" (read *bribed*) by her employers with the possibility of a more interesting position—as well as more money—to enroll in a two-year college program. As many others do, she transferred to a four-year college and will graduate soon.

Increasingly, students are like Bill, a composite of several of the more mature retreads on the college scene. Bright, a MENSA member, Bill was largely self-educated. With only a high school education, Bill became manager of a large organization where higher education was a conditional symbol, a reason for unsolicited early retirement or outplacement. Though of retirement age, Bill entered a two-year college in order to designate his own retirement date. People like Bill stimulate all class members, including the instructor, to bring more sophisticated information to the class. Frequently, these students are retirees with delightful insights into life's enigmas, senior citizens who are still hungry for mental challenges. Or, like Pence, they may be in a prison-desert social environment where isolation from things intellectual is deadlier than any brutality. Like so many others, Azirth, with a full life and a responsible position as a professional musician, hungered for

more. As cornered in her routine as Pence was in his, she sought an acceptable means of diversion, and, for her, that diversion was a degree from her community college.

Further, the students in this group come as lobbyists, business owners, and managers, and often as world travelers. They are immigrants from all parts of the world—Scotland, Iran, Israel, England, India, as well as the Far East. Patrick Hogan (1992) maintains that

> It should be clear that cross-cultural literary study—involving the extensive incorporation of non-Western literary traditions, women's literature, and minority literature into . . . professional research—is, by all current measures, intellectually, aesthetically, and ethically very desirable (p. 191).

Never before have students and instructors been on such equal footing in the resources available to academe (Watkins, 1991, A-21). While charged at all times with orderly structure in the learning arrangement, instructors will often need to be facilitators and learners themselves, rather than captains. Our new technology offers teaching tools never before available without the full commitment of specialists. Unfortunately, one of the roadblocks to excellence is the failure to develop personnel adequately (Hammons, 1987, p. 5). To help general studies faculties use the tools efficiently, colleges must educate present and future faculties in their use. Some instructors themselves are partially responsible for some of the foot-dragging. Some dedicated book lovers (and most instructors are just that) are frightened by the perceived effect of the computer on their treasured tomes (Lanham, 1992, p. 201).

The students of these instructors, however, continue to learn to operate the needed programs as part of their technologies. Word processors, easily accessible to anyone with basic typing skills, can help students revise their papers, as well as check their spelling and even some elements of grammar. Many students come to English classes far more experienced than their professors in the use of these tools. These and other modern developments guarantee that two-year colleges will continue to see an influx of students with significant real-world experience, students who will turn to community colleges as the major source for lifelong learning.

The Lost Children: Those Seeking a "First Chance"

Perhaps the most trying enigma for two-year colleges as a whole are the students in this group. Among these students are the pink-

cheeked, unenlightened, high school graduates. Usually unmotivated, they are truly the "loose cannons" in the classroom.

Typically, members of this group exhibit some characteristics common to students like Ginger and Patty. Both women have the potential to succeed but feel unsure and torn about their futures; beneath their veneer of maturity, both are scared and defensive. Often, they try to continue their high school hijinks by titillating the instructor, disregarding attendance policies, skipping out during class breaks, and showing up late for class. Ginger, who is quite bright, had done very well in high school, but with little motivation to pursue further schooling, she perceived college as a time and place to have fun, to ignore family and school restrictions. She needs to be challenged immediately, before she sabotages her own standards to the detriment of her future. Assigned to a more serious group where she has an opportunity to absorb problems vicariously, she may one day recognize her naïveté, determine to bypass the burdens shared by her counterparts, and commit herself to her own progress. Given a very short time with interactive video, collaboration with a partner on computer-generated English programs, field trips, cooperative education, and educational excursions (Neilson, 1991, p. 46), she may finally recognize that self-control is the first prerequisite for successful shedding of control by others.

Her friend Patty, on the other hand, who was not as successful with the subject matter, managed to drift through high school with little, if any, encouragement or supervision from her family or from any social structure. Like Ginger, she, too, will need to break from the lure of ingrained practices. A variety of things—faculty coaching, time spent in learning centers with the instructor, computer programs for reviewing the basics, and carefully selected group membership—offer potential for lifting Patty from the morass in which she is mired. For people like Patty—the underprepared students—Neilson (1991) calls community colleges the "Last-Chance Colleges" (p. 47). Given their deprived backgrounds, the intellectual wastelands from which they come, these students may consider community colleges to be more like *"First*-Chance Colleges."

According to Joe Mastro (1991), a professor of political science at the University of North Carolina, the new scholarship is "like teaching by the seat of your pants" (C-4). Mastro emphasizes the need to keep up with changing times, to scuttle stolid and predictable lectures in favor of new methods (C-4). While Mastro specifically addresses the difficulty of teaching political science after the breakup of the Soviet Union, his words nevertheless apply most pointedly to the two-year colleges.

These colleges receive students who aspire to be more than they were yesterday, hence, the excitement (Rowan & Mazie, 1990, p. 38).

Though time alone will alleviate the problems of some students like Ginger and Patty, a National Council of Instructional Administrators (NCIA) paper, a policy statement on student success, offers an impressive outline of helpful approaches for retaining such students and helping them succeed. Established methods will need to be supplemented with frequent conferences and newer methods. Group learning—perhaps one of the most successful approaches—is currently receiving much pedagogical attention. Precise group formation can stimulate sparks in the most mundane, but necessary, subjects. Given the task of explicating a passage from *Crime and Punishment*, ideally the Bills, the Gingers, the Pattys, and the Marjories of the college world can measure Feodor Dostoevsky's philosophy of punishment in early Russia against the seeming impotence of the legal system in the 1990s. The point of the exercise is to have the Bills compare what they have instinctively gathered about today's system with the humanity of the early Russian system. The Gingers will recognize and begin to respect the wealth available and will depart their limited realms, while the Pattys will learn to integrate and expand their imaginations. Using this technique, this group of students will learn the process of thinking critically; experience the heritage and culture of their peers, regardless of age or cultural differences; gain valuable skills in communicating with others; and make a timeless literary work part of their lives.

Increasingly, students like Patty and Joe, whatever their ages or circumstances, require extensive developmental studies before they qualify for college-credit courses. Here, two-year colleges are providing an invaluable service to society. Fifty-one percent of students receiving two-year degrees in the fall of 1991 at State Technical Institute at Memphis had taken at least one developmental course. A study by the University of Michigan found that only 13 percent of adults could synthesize the main argument from a newspaper, only 14 percent could use a bus schedule, and a mere 14 percent could calculate a tip in a restaurant (DeLoughry, 1992, p. 40). After eight years of formal research, Rita Smilkstein (1990) subscribes to the hypothesis that learning is a physical activity. She maintains that "anyone who has learned to speak (this includes lip reading or signing for the deaf) has a brain that is highly intelligent and capable of learning at the highest level" (p. 3). Furthermore, "[D]oing, trying, practicing, and making/correcting our own mistakes, and thinking on our own is active learning" (p. 4). Interestingly, she embraces the idea of making "good" mistakes early in the process. School routines have largely adopted rote learning

techniques—lectures, demonstrations, assigned readings, and censure for mistakes (p. 3). Negative emotions, generated from the censure, physically inhibit the learning process. If students' confidence grows, they increase their ability to learn. According to Smilkstein, learning is a natural function available to all but the cognitively impaired. The major quandary for two-year colleges is to arrange a nonthreatening environment that permits "good" mistakes, while it supports constraints imposed by the cost of longer college time. More and more, students who have experienced minimal success in school will continue to choose the two-year college because they fear they will not be able to maintain the pace of a four-year institution.

A Challenge to Be Innovative and to Hold Steadfast

Reaching some students may require the latest in techniques and technology: "I have a whole new awareness that different students out there are thinking differently, learning differently. I tend to think of teaching more as trying to help an individual learn something than as disseminating a body of information" (Watkins, 1991, p. 21).

Bonnie Gardner (1991) also senses the exceptional significance of learning in the two-year college: "For community college leaders, there is often no experience more gratifying than hearing successful graduates describe how their college experience was the key to their accomplishments" (p. 22).

Teachers of these new students will have to become proficient in team teaching and in the new technologies. Jim Hammons (1987) cites the need to commit resources to the continued development of personnel (p. 5). Students entering a two-year college are distinctive; for many, English is a second language, their first being a language spoken anywhere in the world, from rural dialects to inner-city vernacular to Tagalog or Urdu. Their presence in the classroom offers their classmates the opportunity to grow from their diversity, their experiences, and their dreams, as well as accruing for themselves the same opportunities. Through their contact with eclectic groups, insular students and instructors have the opportunity to become citizens of the world.

Community college instructors are positioned to face stimulating combinations of students who create interesting exchanges of ideas, fulfilling even the most exacting teacher's professional expectations. In looking ahead to the future, Dale Parnell invites teachers "to celebrate the joy of mission, the joy of service, the joy of hope, the joy of diversity found in their positions" (qtd. in Gardner, 1990, p. 25).

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4 "The Old Lady in the Student Lounge": Integrating the Adult Female Student into the College Classroom

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A year ago, as I began a new semester of teaching, I asked one of my eighteen-year-old students how he had enjoyed his first composition class. He responded that it had been fine, but that he had been surprised to find a "bunch of mothers" in it. Although this comment struck me as odd, I did not think much about it until later in the day, when I was talking to a new student on campus, a very outgoing, capable, thirty-eight-year-old woman I'll call Sara. She responded to my query about her first day of classes by exclaiming that she felt like "the old lady in the student lounge." Perhaps I was naïve, but these comments took me by surprise.

The attitudes expressed by both of my students that day caused me to take a closer look at the nontraditional female student, the woman who is typically defined as twenty-five years of age or older. I began to wonder how these older women were perceived by the traditional students in the class; how they perceived themselves; if either group believed that the instructors treated the two groups any differently; if the attitudes of the groups had any bearing on classroom dynamics; and finally, what instructors can do in the classroom to facilitate a better rapport between such students.

This essay is one result of my investigation of age and gender, including research done by other teaching professionals as well as by me, which consisted of surveys of 158 students and interviews with both traditional and nontraditional students on the three campuses of the Eastern Iowa Community College District (EICCD). The EICCD is the third largest community college district in Iowa, enrolling over 7,400 students for credit. The three campuses, located in urban centers, also attract many students from the surrounding rural communities. The ethnic/racial background of our students parallels that of the general Iowa population; the majority of students are Caucasian, with

a growing number of Hispanic, African American, and international students. (Statistics on age and gender are provided in the next section of this essay.)

Growing Numbers

The number of adult students on campuses nationwide has risen steadily over the last two decades. From 1970 to 1985, the enrollment of nontraditional students increased by 114 percent, while that of students under the age of twenty-five grew by only 15 percent (Watkins, 1990, A-12). It is predicted that by the mid-1990s, "the percentage of students 25 years old and older will equal that of students under age 25" (Grennan & Schneider, 1989, p. 4). Quite literally, the nontraditional student is quickly becoming the traditional student. Currently in the U.S., there are over six million adults studying for college credit, and these students comprise 45 percent of all college students. Of these students, 67 percent are studying for either an associate's or a bachelor's degree. This should dispel the notion that most adult students are in graduate school. Of these adult college students, 60 percent are women (Hirschorn, 1988, A-35). It is predicted that with more women returning to college after a delay of several years, the national trend of men being better educated will eventually be reversed. The enrollment figures at the community college district where I teach parallel these statistics. Nontraditional students comprise 53.3 percent of the student body, and of these students, 69 percent are women.

With these numbers of adult women on our campuses, we must begin to focus on their particular learning styles and needs. While many older students will say that they feel conspicuous because of their age, they simultaneously and paradoxically feel ignored and invisible for the same reason (Culley, 1989, p. 67). The Carnegie Commission estimates that only 10 percent of colleges nationally have taken steps to assist the adult learner in any concrete way (Clark, 1989, p. 46). It is time, therefore, to change this fault in the educational system by examining the issues of the adult female student.

Student Profile

There are several factors that inhibit the learning of the adult woman who returns to college. The first is the multitude of outside distractions that eat up her time and wear her down physically and emotionally. These may include a full-time job (85 percent of all adult students

work, most of them full time; see Aslanian, 1991, p. 58), sick children, and a full slate of household duties for which many are solely responsible. Some women experience opposition from their spouse and children after deciding to return to school: not having the wife/mother at home is annoying and sometimes threatening. In addition to these outside factors, adult women often sabotage their own learning process through internal obstacles. Many experience what is commonly called "re-entry shock" and reduce their effectiveness through apprehension and uncertainty. They "forget" that they have performed admirably at work and at home for many years; there is "discord between the adult self-image of competence outside the classroom and the student image of incompetence and inferiority" (Evans, 1989, p. 28). Women cripple themselves with an imagined inability to perform academically.

I found several specific anxieties common to most of the women I surveyed. Nearly all respondents mentioned that a lack of basic knowledge or skills such as math or computer usage caused them distress. Others mentioned as prevalent worries the fear of making mistakes; taking a test; writing a "good paper"; being "slower than the younger students"; juggling job, family, and school; being the only older person in the class; and a general fear of failure. Because many women come from backgrounds where academic success is not recognized or rewarded, they may have built-in expectations of failure. Instructors need to be aware of these fears and to encourage students to overcome them. The classroom atmosphere needs to be as comfortable as possible while remaining academically challenging.

Even before she enters the classroom, the returning female student may encounter some difficulty with the academic bureaucracy. College administration and personnel must educate themselves about the lack of experience the returning older female student may have with scheduling, understanding core requirements, and buying books. Simple tasks we assume students can automatically perform may defeat the adult woman. One interviewee, Sara, said, "They expect us to know these things, because of our age, that we just don't know. When I was in the counselor's office, [everyone was] just interested in signing me up for classes. [No one offered me] a tour or any additional information. I was so worried about finding my classrooms on the first day. Isn't that silly? But I was. That just terrified me." Colleges need to reassess their admissions process and make any necessary modifications to help re-entry students to adjust. Sara now volunteers her time by giving campus tours to other nontraditional students who have made the decision to attend college.

Once these women make it into the classroom, most experience great success. Instructors generally enjoy having adult students because they are determined to be active participants in the education process: "They are not like 18-year olds, who are more likely to be a lethargic group that you have to energize," comments one instructor (Watkins, 1989, A-27). But what about the attitudes expressed by the students quoted at the beginning of this essay? What engenders those attitudes? Are they grounded in any measurable reality? Several instructors have agreed that there can be a certain "friction" in classes where half of the students are older, have children, and work full-time, while the other half are right out of high school and still live at home. The two groups "don't always work well together" (Watkins, 1990, A-1). Why is this, and what can be done about it?

Group Interaction

How do the traditional students view the nontraditional women in the classroom? Many of the students who were surveyed responded by saying that they felt "equal" to the nontraditional students. One said, "I converse on an everyday basis with the nontraditional students. In the classroom we have the same obstacles and goals." Some students were able to identify benefits of having adult women in the classroom. Some younger students acknowledged the older students' "wisdom" and "experience." One younger student appreciated the support that the nontraditional students were eager to lend: "You often hear them saying, 'Stick with it. It's worth it.'" Most traditional students agree that the nontraditional female students are "usually a little more prepared for class" and "seem to study harder." Many younger students applaud these women for their effort, although occasionally one will complain that they "get better grades, so then it ruins the curve."

When asked if there was competition over grades between the groups, nineteen-year-old Missy responded, "Oh, definitely! The traditional students see it as the older students [having] only . . . one or two classes to study for, but most of us are taking a full load, so they [the nontraditional female students] have more time to study. They can spend lots of time on one class, but we have five classes, so it's hard to focus." This perceived difference, largely a misconception, is one element of friction that is present in the classroom.

Another difference between the two groups that almost all students, both older and younger, mentioned was the willingness of the adult student to participate in class discussion. Overwhelmingly the stu-

dents agreed that nontraditional students are more outspoken and willing to express their opinions. One adult female student offered this insight: "We [adults] aren't scared anymore. I'm not like I would have been right out of high school. I wouldn't have said anything unless I knew it was absolutely right." Another adult woman told me of a young woman she knew who refused to speak in class anymore after being challenged by an older student: "She told me that she gave her opinion once, and one of the older students put her down. She said she won't speak up again." One of her peers concurred: "Sometimes I find myself not talking or participating in my classes because I feel inferior to the nontraditional students." Obviously this should be of concern to the instructor; we must work to create a more cooperative atmosphere between the two groups.

So how do the nontraditional students feel about being in class with the younger students? The concern most often voiced first was over the age difference. Sara told this story: "When I first started classes, I was scared to death. When I went into my first classroom and sat down, there were a couple of boys who came in joking and talking. They sat down next to me at first and then got up and moved. They probably saw some friends across the room, but I took it personally! No one sat by me that day. The chairs in front of me, beside me, and behind me were empty. I felt so awkward." Many women echoed Sara's feelings of isolation and fear. One woman said, "I felt uncomfortable being outnumbered by the younger students in Comp. I . . . If I had it to do over again, I might take it as a night class [where a higher percentage of students tend to be adults]."

While most of the women surveyed seemed to agree that the two groups "respect each other," one said, "I just hate it when they call me 'Maam.' I know they mean it as a form of respect, but it makes me feel much older. I prefer to be considered a student, the same as them." The most commonly cited problems with being in class with younger students were the younger group's lack of preparedness and "irreverence and lack of respect for the instructor." Many adults narrated instances of younger students talking or creating a disturbance in class, which impeded the adults' ability to concentrate.

Many positive things about sharing classroom experiences were listed by the older students, however. Fun, sense of humor, vibrancy, fresh viewpoints, and lively discussion were among those most often mentioned. Theresa recalled learning a valuable lesson from the younger students: "[I learned to] have fun. I was doing nothing but schoolwork all semester long. Then one day, before class, I came in and pretended to do homework, but I just listened to them talk about a

party they went to. I realized then that I wasn't happy, that studying isn't all there is to life. It might sound shallow, but you should be enjoying college life, even as an adult. You have to have a life outside of school."

Many women are eager to learn about the "younger generation" and their present-day viewpoints. Class discussions provide the perfect opportunity. Theresa related the story of a class where "we were discussing distribution of condoms in high schools. The younger kids were more conservative than I was! Being in class with them has shown me that they are individuals just like the nontraditional students are. I hope I don't lump them all together any more."

It is this kind of exchange in class that contributes to the learning which takes place in addition to that which comes directly from the text. With two such rich and diverse groups, instructors need to take advantage each day of the human resources available in class. Students of all ages agreed that, while there may be some tension and "segregation" between the two groups initially, after the "ice is broken and the semester gets underway," the two groups will interrelate in a productive way. The instructor should facilitate this as quickly as possible, as discussed later in this essay.

I was pleased to learn from 92 percent of my respondents that instructors in my district do not treat the students of either group differently. Students from both age groups who did notice a difference cited an instructor's willingness to accept more readily an excuse from a nontraditional student: According to some traditional students, working overtime at one's job or a flu epidemic at home gives the nontraditional student an advantage in handing in late work, where the younger student would suffer a penalty or a zero grade. Equality and fairness in enforcing classroom rules was requested by some students as a way to maintain friendly relationships and eliminate resentment between the two groups.

Most students agreed that, outside of class a "segregation" exists which is typical: "There is more intermingling in classes than in the student lounge," observed one student. Students with similar lifestyles and experiences tend to "migrate" toward each other. One younger student commented that "the younger students are playing pool or ping pong or watching MTV while the older students are sitting at tables doing homework." Some casual greetings may be exchanged, but the consensus was that people of all ages tend to socialize with their peers because that is more comfortable. When asked if getting to know other students outside of class was a priority, very few students of either age group indicated that it was.

Instructional Methods

When instructors find one or more adult students in the classroom, how can they manipulate the environment to maximize the learning situation for everyone? Many educators join with my students in giving advice on this point. It has been said that

> nontraditional study is more an attitude than a system . . . This attitude puts the student first and the institution second. It concentrates more on the former's needs than the latter's convenience, encourages diversity of individual opportunity rather than uniform prescription, and de-emphasizes time, space, and even course requirements in favor of competence and, where applicable, performance. (Clark, 1989, p. 47)

What it all comes down to is a willingness to be flexible and individualized in our approach. Specifically, what can colleges and individual instructors do?

Some colleges, mine included, have designed special "gateway" courses, or re-entry courses that are designed to help the student adjust to a new, possibly frightening, college experience. These courses are usually graded on a pass/fail basis to reduce student anxiety; the faculty are carefully chosen for concern and empathy. "College Re-entry Skills" and "Planning for Successful Study" are two such courses offered on my campus. Both are taught by members of the counseling staff, and both earn the student two credits toward graduation in one of the core areas.

The topics and skills emphasized in the courses include personal development, career planning, college policies and procedures, writing papers, note taking, and exam taking. These courses offer mutual support among first-semester re-entry students; increased discussion because of small class size; validated importance of past student experience; intensive practice on test taking, paper writing, and other basic skills; and a nonthreatening classroom atmosphere. These courses come highly recommended by adults who have taken them. One interview subject, Theresa, said she learned that she was not as isolated by her fears as she had initially believed. The course discussions gave her the confidence to continue in school which she might not have had otherwise.

The instructor and her willingness to accommodate the particular needs of her students makes a significant difference in a nontraditional student's initial college experience. The professor must be open to trying new approaches when conventional methods fail. Instructors must also be willing to let go of their formal authority in the classroom.

Adult students enter the classroom with a certain "authority of experience" that can be intimidating to some teachers. But if the instructor can allow the students the authority that comes from the knowledge and experience they possess, the students will be empowered with the space and freedom to find their own voice and reality in the material of the course. In a traditionally established classroom, for example, the nontraditional students will continue to "challenge and test" the authority of the instructor and text against what they already know from experience.

Modern theory for teaching the adult learner looks to the Freirean critical approach, which presupposes that "teachers do not possess 100% of the knowledge and students zero" (Shor, 1989, p. 35). The class can be a valuable learning experience for everyone involved, the teacher included, when the resources of thirty people are tapped rather than relying on the authority of one. This also enables the students to move through William Perry's stages of intellectual development, from stage one, where the students believe that the teacher/authority knows all the right answers, to stage six, where the students realize that they must take any information given, question it, and make their own decisions and reality (Schneider, 1989, p. 63). This type of critical thinking is valuable to all of our students, traditional and nontraditional alike.

The traditional classroom atmosphere—where the teacher lectures at the front of the room and students passively take notes or engage in a one-on-one dialogue with only the teacher—must be abandoned: "Adults don't play the passive-recipient game very well," says one professor. We must make education "an active enterprise" (Watkins, 1990, A-1). Some instructors are adopting ten- or fifteen-minute minilectures, followed by discussions led by students who both ask and answer the questions.

Collaborative learning, where students work together either as a class or in small groups, seems particularly effective for adult students. Nearly all who responded to my survey indicated a desire for this type of activity. Most said they believed that collaborative activities at the beginning of the semester would "break the ice" more quickly and help dispel many of the myths that the two age groups hold about each other. Many students indicated an interest in interviewing another student on a specific topic where differences of opinion would probably arise, thereby leading to informative discussions. One nontraditional student suggested that I send the students outside of the classroom in traditional/nontraditional pairs to interview a third party for an essay assignment. This, she felt, would "force" the stu-

dents to interact and get to know each other in a less formal atmosphere. She also felt that the types of questions asked and the reactions to the responses would reveal the personality of the two interviewers to each other.

Another type of activity that I have found to be effective is to assign a generative topic for an essay. The idea is to select a generative topic that will lead to essays to which everyone in the class can relate. The topic should be general enough that each student's focus will be different while still related by a common thread. For example, one topic that has worked particularly well in my Composition I classes is "Narrate a time when you learned a valuable lesson." Then, through the sharing of the essays, students can discuss ideas and similar experiences, thus bridging the gap between the generations that many believe to be so wide. The stories and experiences of today's teens are inevitably similar to the exploits of some of my older students. This creates new respect for the adults in the eyes of some younger students.

Another assignment that has worked particularly well is to use a division/classification format to have students explore the various problems college students face. In-class sharing of these ideas leads to a better understanding of the challenges each group faces. Pairing a traditional and a nontraditional student for a partnered essay on this topic also works well. The mode may be comparison/contrast, with each student contributing examples from his or her own experience which are relevant to the obstacles encountered during a college career. With students working so closely together toward a common goal, coupled with their diverse perspectives, a significant amount of learning about the other person automatically occurs.

Students can also discuss the various stages in the writing process through these exercises. Common concerns and problems with writing can be discussed. Using professional essays that cohere around a topical theme such as marriage or parenting can also be used in a similar fashion. The class can also be divided into groups of diverse members for discussion of their essays. Ideas and viewpoints as well as reactions to writing style can be shared.

Peer editing is another approach that works especially well with adult women. Theorists such as Jean Baker Miller and Carol Gilligan point out that because women, in their roles as wives and mothers, have been socialized to relate to and support others, to help them develop and grow, the connectedness that peer editing emphasizes is a natural approach to use with adult women (Schneider, 1989, p. 64). Peer editing also quickly dispels the myth for the adult student that all

other students are automatically capable and profound writers. This activity enables the teacher to promote the ideas that constant writing and rewriting are crucial to improvement; that an expanded sense of critical audience beyond the instructor can be helpful to the student writer; that students can become competent critics of their own writing and the writing of others; and that as the student functions simultaneously as learner and teacher, she learns even more about the writing process. This process allows the instructor to step down as the authority figure; it empowers the students by creating a nontraditional learning environment, which is what the theorists tell us to do for our adult students.

Proponents of this approach warn, however, that the instructor should remain active in this process. Each step of the peer-editing process should be guided and monitored by the instructor. A sample essay can be given to each student at the beginning of the course. The instructor can guide the students through a revision process, demonstrating what does and does not constitute constructive criticism. Peer-editing teams of at least three people are important to avoid any threatening situations. Both oral and written feedback are important in this process in order for students to do a thorough job. If carried out and monitored properly, the peer-editing approach can teach the elements of good writing and revision, encourage cooperation, and develop one's self-confidence through the ability to balance a variety of viewpoints and assert authority when making the final choices for revision of the essay. Again, the teacher has faded inconspicuously from the role as authority, and the student has learned to believe in herself.

Journals are another good technique to use in a writing class with adult students because they provide a less formal, and therefore less threatening, way to do written work. Many students will open up in response to a journal assignment in a way they may not feel comfortable doing in class. Teachers also have the opportunity to respond to students in a nonauthoritarian way. Topics for writing may even include subjects that deal with the diverse student population. Writings can then be used as starting places for class discussion. Because of their informal nature, journals are best used as writing supplements. However, they should not completely replace formal writing assignments.

Those of us in two-year colleges who teach the increasing number of adults, particularly adult women, need to be aware of their special needs and be willing to accommodate those needs if at all possible. Just as we try to engage our younger students in the classroom and create a proper learning atmosphere, we must do the same for adult students.

As one instructor put it, "The best way to teach older students is the best way to teach younger students" (Watkins, 1990, A-1)—trying a variety of approaches; being flexible and open; recognizing that adults may be uncomfortable in the classroom and that the traditional students may initially be uncomfortable having them there; and using existing teaching methods to help bridge the misunderstandings that exist between the two groups. The results are well worth the effort, because adults add a new dimension to any classroom.

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5 What Happened to Darleen? Reconstructing the Life and Schooling of an Underprepared Learner

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As an open-admissions institution, the community college has offered its instructors the opportunity to work with those who, as Mike Rose says, got lost in our schools and who return to college to repair fractured educations. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, teachers took to heart Mina Shaughnessy's admonition to "dive in," and began to find ways to engage adults in reading and writing tasks that enabled them to acquire the skills and knowledge they needed to live and work in some ascendant way. In the 1990s, urban learners face even more difficult situations in school: violence, drugs, teenage pregnancy. School failure for minority groups is with them, and us, today. Students who have suffered these ills will be ready for the community college in the year 2000.

If we are to be ready for them, we need to learn more from the students who currently sit in our classrooms, students like Darleen. Darleen is forty-one. After quitting high school at the end of ninth grade, she returned four years ago to the urban community college where I teach. She represents many other adults: no longer young, unskilled, haunted by self-doubt, and yet paradoxically optimistic about the power of education to rekindle a sense of self-worth. In a sense, Darleen is a worst-case scenario: placed in special education classes as a girl, a school dropout, pregnant at fifteen, unable to read, write, or calculate as an adult, habitually silent. She scarcely seems a promising candidate for college work. Yet (and this contradiction

Marlene Griffith read previous versions of this paper and considered with me the best ways to draw out the theoretical and pedagogical implications of Darleen's story. Margot Dashiell, instructor of the ethnic literature class in which Darleen wrote the Langston Hughes essay, shared pedagogical strategies and offered comments to refine my thinking about the importance of validating students' cultural experiences (see particularly the first "Reflections" section of this essay).

raises a central question of this paper) she is also a best-case scenario: after basic skills work, she is headed toward an AA degree. What happened to Darleen which accounts for the movement away from school as a youngster and then back into school twenty years later?

Talking to Darleen offered a starting point for understanding her change in direction. She has a keen sense that a personal connection with teachers and tutors played a key role in her learning—and in her failure to learn. Taking up Darleen's theme from a theoretical position, I suggest that we need to integrate Darleen's emphasis on the importance of a personal connection in terms of our changing ideas about how learning in school takes place. When Darleen was first in school, remember, teachers thought of all learning, especially learning to read and write, as a solitary activity. Students were expected to study independently; to work together was cheating. Now, twenty years later, we have come to understand that literacy is socially constructed. We question the notion of solitary authorship and see writing as a collaborative enterprise. In looking back on her school experience, Darleen intuits what researchers are just discovering: that learning to read and write depends on the connections between expert and novice, and that failure to take in literacy lessons is also created by breakdowns in these connections, by misconnections.

The Story the School Records Tell

Darleen's cumulative records, which span the years from entry into kindergarten to "dropping out" at the end of ninth grade, show how these misconnections are made. The movement for her was always in one direction: a distancing from school barely noticeable in primary school, escalating rapidly in middle school, becoming irreparably wide by junior high. This image of a child slipping away from school emerges the way buckets fill up under a leaky roof: no single drop seems to make the discernible difference.

On the pupil identification form, there is no special hint of a dismal outcome: Last name, Ramos; first name, Darleen. (This is, by her request, not a pseudonym.) Birth date: 12/20/51. Her address is listed at a street on the fringes of the inner city, her apartment, "downstairs." Father, Felipe; home address, above; occupation: Mechanic; Mother, Maria; home address, above; Hwfe—Cannery. These few words conjure up a vision of the routine that guided the lives of this family, an understanding based, in my recollection, of a time when manufacturing was the staff of life in this city: the big Del Monte factory down

near the freeway, the giant truckloads of tomatoes that poured into town from the Central California Valley in July and August, the smokestacks that poured out white steam every afternoon, the pressure and bustle of double shifts that ended and poured everybody home again, the seasonal work ending in October. Now the cannery is closed permanently; the child is middle-aged. With one last note—Brothers and sisters: Angelo and Kathleen—Darleen was assigned to "A.M. kgn," Room 2.

The record speaks again one year later, when Darleen's teacher made comments about her for the school nurse; these phrases call her "anemic-looking," a "mouth breather." The following year's teacher again commented on her mouth breathing. Adenoids? Bad tonsils? The school record made no detour into rumination or hunches. In 1962, the nurse recommended a vision exam for prescription glasses. The last entry regarding her vision reported, "Nothing done re: eyes." As we try to understand the forces that helped shape an adult who did not learn to read or write well enough to meet the expectations of school or employers, the lack of essential health care at the right time must not be left out of the accounting. When I asked her what she remembers about learning to write, she said that she learned "mostly by watching other kids"; she could not see the blackboard from her seat.

The next sheets in Darleen's cumulative record are teachers' progress reports, spaces about a half-inch square for each area in the curriculum for each semester. During her three semesters in kindergarten, nothing is inscribed in the "reading experience" column. Nothing with print? Nothing? Throughout her elementary school years, one theme that stands out in Darleen's education is a dearth of books.

Another theme is the repetition of the few texts she was given. All told, by the end of her elementary school experience, she had read, twice each, the three pre-primers, *Fun with Dick and Jane*, *Many Surprises*, and *Our Town*. According to the record, these books, along with copies of *Weekly Reader* and two or three library books, constituted what the teacher counted as Darleen's world of print in school until she was twelve.

Like the books Darleen read, the comments her teachers wrote about her are conspicuous either by their absence or by their repetition. Until she was nine years old, no teacher wrote anything in the "special abilities, accomplishments, and interests" column, when someone commented that she was helpful; the following year, she was noted as "desirous of learning." However, in the "learning difficulties" column, there is no such scarcity. She was termed "very shy" in kin-

dergarten. The next year she was pegged as "very slow," immature, poor at writing, apt to daydream. The following year saw these comments repeated, plus the addition of "unable to comprehend new facts."

But the most damning comment, I think, occurs at the end of her second year in first grade, when the teacher wrote, "doing the best that she is able to do." Although this teacher assigned a final grade of S for satisfactory in both conduct and achievement, the year's comment seems, in retrospect, ominous. Although her movement from one grade to the next had been slow, the record assigned her to a graded classroom; at the end of six such grades, of course, one "completes elementary school." But at the end of this year, Darleen's record became oddly nonsequential as she was no longer assigned a grade level, but only to "Sp" (for special education classes), which effectively removed her from clear and definite progress toward graduation.

From this point on, her progress is noted yearly, in June, rather than semester by semester. The box for "promotion" is left empty. Ditto marks repeat the "doing the best that she is able to do" comment from previous years, and additional notes signal a student in distress, mentioning attitudinal difficulties associated with her efforts to learn. She is described as "upset easily when criticized" and "very nervous when she learns new concepts." Scientific-sounding terms—"ocular-motor poor"—lend a note of medical authority to the teachers' observations.

The classroom teachers' comments have their source, I suspect, in the specialists' comments and test scores that are also a part of Darleen's cumulative folder. The year she was placed in special education, a Stanford-Binet estimated her mental age at 5.0 years and chronological age at 8.0. This test score is in the same vein as the teachers' comment from that year: "doing the best that she is able to do." Six years later, when she was fifteen, a Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC) score of 64 was described by the examiner as "well below average." The longer she stayed in school, the further her mental age lagged behind her actual age; one year later, a Stanford-Binet estimated that the sixteen-year-old Darleen had a mental age of eight. On the basis of these tests, the testing specialist outlined the following vocational implications:

> a very sheltered work situation. Her concentration is too shallow for making judgments, and she has significant perceptual difficulties which further hinders [sic] judgment . . . The examiner suggests that Darleen could satisfactorily handle sorting jobs (like sorting and folding laundry, or something similar) which would require only gross motor coordination and minimal perceptual judgment.

Reflections: Reconstructing the School's Role

I have been pondering the record for several months now, trying to figure out how Darleen slipped away from her teachers. It doesn't seem a mystery, at first. After all, the English of school was foreign to her. She was, naturally enough, quiet. The materials that the school offered Darleen—*Fun with Dick and Jane, Our Town*—were not likely to lead her to recognize her family or the urban center she called "Her Town." But the ideology, the reasons her teachers attended to her deficiencies and neglected her potential, is anything but transparent. We can say that she went to school in an institution where the deficit model held sway, surrounding her like water surrounds a fish. Submerged in teachers' and testers' minds, this model probed her knowledge of vocabulary or Block Design tasks, looking for certain cognitive structures. Not finding these structures, her performance on the tests justified their low expectations for her: "doing the best she is able to do"; "concentration too shallow for making judgments"; "requires a very sheltered work situation."

But there are contradictions that belie a simple interpretation of this girl as a "slow learner," indications that the staff selected out the negative rather than the positive elements she brought to school. Side by side with evidence of "superficial concentration" during the IQ test is an examiner's note about her persistence on task. Darleen's verbal IQ scores exceeded her performance scores—and this in spite of the fact that her reading tests suggested a limited ability to decode or comprehend text. Apparently these contradictions raised no significant questions about the accuracy or the appropriateness of the labels she had acquired. And without invoking the big generalizations, like institutionalized racism, it is difficult to understand how what happened to Darleen was viewed as right, just, and inevitable—which is the stuff ideologies are made of.

But whatever the issues her schooling raises for us, elementary school ended for her in 1964, when she was thirteen. At last there is a mark in the "promotion" box: junior high, special class. The following year, comments on the cumulative folder are replaced by junior high and high school transcripts which contain only grades: C's in all courses, including English 1, English 2, arithmetic, and science. One A in student work experience. No F's or D's.

The IQ tests also explain her mediocre grades. F's, it seems, are reserved for students who "could do better." C's, the no-comment grade of the five-point scale, say essentially that she was doing the best that she could do. The testing was completed in the spring of her

ninth-grade year. In October of the following semester, she left school; the last note in her file says "DROPOUT" in capital letters. Apparently, three years later, she returned to school for one month, but was asked to leave because she was too old.

The Story Darleen and Her Family Tell

Just as the school does not seem to have a particularly sharp image of her, Darleen has a consistently hazy recollection of her school experience. Her recollections of what she did in school after third grade are nonexistent; of the first two years, she has written: "[W]e would write the alphabits, read stories, draw out ourself on the floor" (i.e., one child would draw an outline of the other's body on a piece of paper, an activity often used to foster self-image in the primary grades).

She describes feeling what appears to be rather vulnerable, mystified—perhaps "powerless" is the current term that applies. Her elementary school memories of the world of print are even narrower than her cumulative record reported: she recalls not the basal readers, but only several Dr. Seuss books and a story about a "Little Red Schoolhouse," and she remembers these books, apparently, because they were associated with trips to the school library where someone read them aloud. Though she checked one book out each time, she cannot recall doing anything with these books when she got home.

She cannot remember the name of a single teacher in her grade school. Her only sharp and spontaneously reported recollection was of a second-grade teacher who locked her in a closet in the classroom and then forgot to let her out at the end of the school day. What behaviors resulted in this punishment, or why it was so harsh, are difficult to follow as she describes them. The circumstances are, like so many in her school life, unclear.

She characterizes herself as "very quiet—I stood to myself." She had no friends because she was, she says, "afraid to open up." She was afraid "they were laughing behind my back." She reports that what she feared was that others would discover her difficulty with writing: "If someone asked me to sign their yearbook, I would not." She maintained this distance without change, apparently, until leaving school, except that from these years she recalls one teacher by name, Mrs. Dudley, with whom she felt personally close. While she can't remember what classes this woman taught, she felt she could ask her anything she wanted to. She remembers Mrs. Dudley as an inspiration. Darleen says that, "In those days, if you were pregnant, you couldn't

go to school [but] on the sad day I gathered together my things, this teacher said that I should never give up my dream of an education."

She says she never did give up on her education, but school certainly took a back seat after the birth of her two children. Her family circle widened to include her husband and baby, her parents, and her brothers and sisters. She apparently worked at odd jobs, doing a paper route, serving food in the school cafeteria, helping her landlord. While her children were growing up, she took care of them while her husband worked as an auto-body repairperson, a security guard, a carpenter.

Darleen is vague about the reasons for her difficulties in school. She speaks with some bitterness about the way she was treated in school since, as she says repeatedly, "I always did my work." She does not remember her mother giving the school permission to place her in special education classes. Sometimes Darleen seeks an explanation for school problems in her family life. They were "never there for me." Her family did not help her get glasses. No one read to her. As we try to understand the forces that pushed Darleen out of school, we must consider how home and school interacted.

My first visit with Darleen's mother yielded the family's official version of the school story: Darleen was a good girl who never missed school, was never any problem. She was shy, a loner. If there were problems, Darleen never told her family about them. The mother's story, like the school's, does little to dispel the image of a child whom adults did not know very well, a youngster left to fend for herself against siblings and peers who were unkind, who called her names like "stupid" and made her the butt of hurtful pranks.

But if this constitutes a kind of neglect, it must be seen in the context of the mother's other stories, which she told in subsequent conversations—stories of what it took to keep this household together. There were aunts, uncles, grandmothers, mother and father, and six children to support. With immense drive, Darleen's family undertook this task. Her father worked for many years for a transit company. Her mother labored first in the fields—"picking currants was the worst"—and then on jobs washing Pullman cars, doing industrial laundry, and pipe fitting. She finally started at the cannery, first on the line, then was promoted to "floor lady," and finally to supervisor. She summed up her attitude toward life, the one which she recommended that her child "pound onto herself: If you want it bad enough, you could *do* it; just say you know you could do it, and before you know it, you could do it. Just say, 'You're goin' to make it!'" Encoded in these phrases is her belief in personal power, a determination that "It can be done—*Si,*

se puede." How, then, did this family play into the scenario of Darleen's failure in school as a girl, when, as an adult, she has become a successful college student?

Reflections: Reconstructing the Family's Role

The answer is not a simple one. John Ogbu (n.d.) has argued that the origins of competence—the general and specific skills needed to get along in the world—lie in the nature of adult cultural tasks. As he puts it: "Insofar as most adults in the population perform their sex-appropriate tasks competently . . . it follows that most children grow up to be competent men and women" (n.p.). Minority groups living within but separate from mainstream middle-class culture develop alternative skills for coping with life. Of all the children, only Darleen's brother did, in fact, graduate—not only from high school, but from San Jose State University. It is tempting to imagine, then, that Darleen—daughter in a family within a cultural group in which women were historically not expected to "need" education—faced fewer educational opportunities because of who she was: poor, Hispanic, female.

By fifteen, Darleen had moved out of the sphere of academic influence and into the adult patterns of women in her culture. She had a baby, and she and her husband pursued alternative means of economic survival by taking on casual or menial jobs and by participating in mutual exchange with their family and friends. Darleen built a stable, if economically precarious, life for herself, her children, and her children's children, following the models her parents passed on to her.

But to say only this is to ignore the spirit of that family. Along with the *"Si, se puede"* determination to survive and succeed, which she took in from her mother and father, a respect for education remains one of Darleen's central values. I would echo Mike Rose's (1989) comment that, for people like her, schooling, learning to read and write, is more than just a chance at a better job—it is "intimately connected with respect, with a sense that they are not beaten, the mastery of print revealing the deepest impulse to survive" (p. 216). She speaks proudly of her children's graduation from high school, and proudly of her own efforts to complete her education. As she wrote (and I reproduce her text exactly), "I used to baby sit but now I go to school and I hope to get my G e d someday."

If we were to fault the school for Darleen's failure, it would be only to say that they (like we) were victims of theory: they practiced the best that was known at the time. That residual framework of "cultural deficit" thinking, sunk deeply into the assessment and instructional

processes of the sixties, guided teachers and testers to select certain features of Darleen's character ("slow," "apt to daydream") as a basis for decision making, and to ignore other features ("persistence on task," "desirous of learning"). If we were to fault the family—but wait. The point is not to find fault, but to uncover the multiple forces that pushed Darleen always in one direction: out of school. Only by appreciating the massive nature of these obstacles is it possible to acknowledge what Darleen had to overcome to create a new self-image—a student self.

The Story of an Underprepared Learner in College

At thirty-seven, Darleen entered community college. She did it in the face of her fear about that IQ score, of not belonging and being called stupid, of exposing her scant command of written language. Few educational settings would welcome those kinds of scores, that kind of history. Yet it is precisely such reconstructive work with underprepared learners that community college basic skills programs, under open-admission policies, set as one of their priorities. So here we are looking not only at the forces that fracture an education, but also at those that can repair it, how students like Darleen can, if they wish, rebuild studenthood.

Piri Thomas (1972 [1967]) has written that, for a poor Hispanic child in urban America, "if you ain't got heart, you ain't got *nada*" (p. 37). It was heart, *corazón*, courage—those qualities which translate into persistence on task which early school teachers and counselors had generally overlooked—that put Darleen back on the road to becoming a student. On the first day Darleen arrived at the community college, courage seemed less than adequate equipment. Her thick magnifying lenses in enormous brown frames and wispy hair almost hid her eyes as she waited on the cement bench in the courtyard by my office. The day was hot and she was sweating in new school clothes. The fall semester had begun two weeks before, and my classes had no room for her. I remember my quick and unkind judgment, not different from that of other teachers who had helped to shape the figure I saw in front of me. Late enrolling, barely able to read, she almost exuded ineptitude. I told her my classes were full and probably—because students in this course had to take several classes at once—too demanding. "Come back next semester," I said, figuring I had done her, and myself, a favor. I did not expect to see her again, but the next semester she returned to my class.

She says that she would never have tried again, except that she met a tutor as she left, who said, "Oh, don't worry. We have lots of people here who have trouble with reading. You'll learn." At that time she read only single-syllable words and could not fill out the one-page college application form without help. This invitation remained central in her mind.

Like all Darleen's previous teachers, I had my biases. A study of Freire's notions of centering instruction in the needs of students had led me to a determination to teach to strength and not to weakness. I had long before been taken by Vygotsky's (1978) notion that a teacher works in the "zone of proximal development"—not with those cognitive structures a learner has in place already but with those ready to develop, with the assistance of expert tutelage, that learning precedes development rather than the other way around. I have written elsewhere about how these pedagogical notions enabled me to work with Darleen as a reader (Wilson, 1990) and that the road was full of interactive pitfalls and pratfalls. Here, I will focus on how these notions informed the instruction which led her to develop writing for the academic literacy that she would need for community college work.

For students like Darleen, the academic invitation must be extended through the pedagogy teachers use. One of the richest resources of the community college is the opportunity it affords teachers to teach in new ways. The student-centered classroom for developmental writers offers a particularly rich opportunity to design experimental writing tasks. Free from demands for specific kinds of writing products, teachers can offer challenging composing tasks and learn much about students' writing processes by observing how learners approach these tasks. Although instructive research is now being done on the logic of errors made by underprepared students (Hull & Rose, 1990), how these students learn, over time, to match their writing with assigned tasks has been less often examined. And as we mark out four stages of Darleen's writing development over a two-year period, a time in which she worked with various teachers in a variety of courses, we see that the overriding accomplishment is a continually improving ability to hit the target the teachers' tasks set up.

Upon entering her first reading class in the community college, Darleen was off base in just about every way—except that she adhered to the essential minimum: she tried, diligently, to do the work. I observed this initial writing behavior as she worked on an assignment called "Beautiful Words." My own purpose in giving this assignment was to discover whether or not students could develop metalinguistic awareness, an awareness of "word-as-object." The students' task was

to select a number of words that conjured up rich sensory images or were sonorous. The lesson was introduced with a poem by Laurie Duesing, which I read somewhere a few years ago, called "I ask them to choose five beautiful words." The poem begins:

> My students give me sanctuary and refuge, olive, and lime
> Offer flourish, pristine, divine. . . .
> Their choices show they already know the joy of green, yellow, and black.

The class read the poem aloud and talked about these words—the way they evoked particular images, the way each one sounded. The assignment asked students to think of words which they thought of as "beautiful," to select magazine pictures to illustrate them, and to explain what they found beautiful about the words. When the assignment came in, it was clear that Darleen had not registered the word-as-object notion. Instead, she produced a list (characteristic of many writers in the earlier stages of literacy) in which she collected words—like "time," "marriage," "shopping," "television," "school," "romance," "soap," "baby"—words which asserted her values, the "beauty" of the words aside. As I now read back through her booklet of words, I can see that it bears her indelibly personal imprint. "Soap," for example, suggests her pride in cleanliness; she defines the word by using it in the following sentence (again reproduced as she wrote it): "I use a lot of soap wish my colthes." She explains its importance to her in terms of other key values ("without soap we would not have clean clothes to where to school"). She had missed the teacher's point, but what she did is characteristic of many underprepared learners who do not always have the framework from which to identify what is important to the teacher, or even to recognize the possibility that what she did was not what the teacher meant. The list of words, each one explained in one or two sentences and replete with errors in conventional correctness, marks the first stage of Darleen's writing that I observed.

A second phase appeared the following summer, when she enrolled in another semester of basic reading. In this class she was encouraged to keep a dialogue journal in the reading class. In this journal, the teacher's task was apparently an easier target for Darleen to hit: it asked only that students write about topics of personal interest to them, which lent itself to something Darleen had already shown a predisposition toward. She quickly became adept at this, her writing becoming progressively lengthier, more fluent, and with fewer unconventional spellings. By the end of the summer semester, her writing

had doubled in length, and she had apparently also begun to regard writing as a form of direct communication with the teacher. In this sample from her journal, she began with "Well," a familiar topic marker in ordinary conversation, and the narrative she told suggested an ongoing exchange with her respondent:

> Well yesterday when my Granddaughter came over and she was crying my cat ran out of the room to see what was going on. he is so funny sometimes I think that he is a real person because he likes to watch TV he very playful when I am down he make me happy. my cat is black and wite and his name is Sylvester and he is two month. he like to sleep at the end of my bed and wake me up in the morning. he is like a little kid the one thing I like is that he dose not ask for anything money.

By the end of the summer, Darleen began to develop a new branch in her writing: still in the context set up by the dialogue journal, these entries introduced topics not drawn from personal experience. In her work's earliest form, she copied bits of writing she enjoyed reading, with no attribution of ownership. In one, she wrote: "You Know You're Getting Old When (1) Everything Hurts and what Doesn't Hurt Doesn't Work 2) Your Knees Buckle, and your Belt Won't." She records twenty-two such aphorisms. Copying at various points became problematic for Darleen, and only a bit at a time did she begin to figure out what teachers regarded as "her own independent work." But copying instructed her in the conventional marks of print (apostrophes, capital letters, and indentations for paragraphs) as well as line formats that were new to her. Though copying is proscribed from earliest school (Hull & Rose, 1990), it marked the beginning of something new in her writing.

In the next phase (and the last one to be considered here), Darleen produced "academic prose" at its most elemental level. She came closer to producing what teachers call "an essay" by blending the two previous composing practices she had acquired—copying and descriptions of personal experience—into a single unit. But this was not accomplished without great struggle—in fact, Darleen was almost to the point of turning away from "her dream of education." As witness and coach, I charted closely how Darleen forged this new procedural knowledge about "how to write."

Darleen had moved into a more advanced level of basic skills courses in the community college, one of them a sociology class. By March, the tasks were becoming increasingly difficult. In this assignment, students selected a poem and applied it to circumstances in their own lives. The work was to be done as an in-class essay, and Darleen,

the teacher reported afterward, wrote only a few words. "Maybe she just isn't ready," the teacher mused. The sociology instructor returned the paper to Darleen and told her to work more on it. Later, Darleen was alternately depressed and angry: "I don't have anything to say about what Langston Hughes is talking about. I'm not black! She's mean!" were just two of the barriers I remember she threw up for herself to ward off her concern that here, finally, was the point at which she "just didn't have it."

While she was sitting outside my office, at the same concrete bench where she had waited for me that first day, just two years before, I spoke to Darleen, trying now to get her to stay, to try. It wasn't easy. The weight of all those buckets of spillover from early failures sat squarely between us, and it took what delicacy I could muster to launch discussion of the idea. She might, I suggested, have had some experiences not too far away from "being made to stay in the kitchen when company comes." The bonds made during the previous semesters stretched taut, then held. She relaxed as we talked about growing up Hispanic in white America; we rehearsed verbally what she could write down later, a method which I had studied earlier as a step on the road to assisting students like Darleen in developing written compositions (Wilson, 1988). When she was calm, when she had, in words, experiences that she could connect to the assigned reading, she went at once to a quiet desk and wrote the following piece. I quote a longish portion of this first draft to illustrate this blending of voices—Langston Hughes's and her own. I have italicized the portions she quotes directly from Hughes's piece:

> This is what Epilogue means to me
>
> As a Puerto Rican I learn to deal with a lot of the outside problem as well but I, too, laugh and eat well and grow strong because I, too, am an American. And being an American I know what it means to have freedom, and I know we are gods children we deserve to eat in the same restaurant or ride on the same bus. As American I am not ashamed of who I am or what I can and Cannot do, and I don't care who is ashamed of me *I too sing America.*
>
> *I am the darker Brother*
>
> *They send me to eat in the kitchen*
>
> *When company comes.*
>
> This line says to me that if someone was to send me in the kitchen I would feel not wanted, or there is something wrong with me. This line says to me that even though they may be ashamed of me I will grow strong.

What the essay lacks as college material is not difficult to see. But what the essay contains, we teachers must train our eyes to look for. It is a weaving of two voices, a polyphony which reminds us, as Shirley Brice Heath (1990) calls to our attention, that conversation and essay form have common roots and shared histories. It is easy to overlook Darleen's achievement. She has just talked through this essay with someone; she has not digested the poet's voice. And I would agree—but here, in this work, for the first time, Darleen is writing about her own experience through words of a poet distant from her in both space and time. In this composition, we see the underpinnings of the essay form so familiar to secondary and college teachers: the multivoiced layering that includes in its most sophisticated form the writer's persona, the supporting authority's voice, and the readers' implicit voices—of agreement and dissent—as well. Like any complex practice, it had to be constructed. Darleen came to the practice of copying and the practice of writing about herself; she used them separately for nearly two years. Then, in response to a new and more difficult context, she momentarily lost and then recovered her heart, and then fused for the first time these written practices. And we see again what Darleen lost in her first try at schooling, when she failed to develop the literate dialogue with teachers from which so much can later grow.

Almost two years later, four years after her first day of returning to school, she was finally "promoted" out of remedial classes in the community college. She took (and passed with A's) an English composition class one level below the transferable course in composition, "Ethics and Human Values," child psychology. She is now taking a college-level course in speech and continues to struggle with the math that prepares her for elementary algebra. Darleen's college career has begun in earnest.

Reflections: Issuing the Academic Invitation

I do not want to draw conclusions from this story about Darleen, a story constructed by many participants and reconstructed here from various perspectives. Instead, I want to use it to point to the various windows it opens on the learning process and on the role of the community college in fostering this process.

Darleen's case leads us to reconsider the old conflict between nature or nurture, the question of whether "you are born with it" or "your culture gives it to you." As I tried to make sense of what happened in

Darleen's school career as a girl, it seemed that the school measured her "nurture" with a middle-class yardstick and reasoned (illogically, I now think) from their results to her "nature." What these tests did not measure was another aspect of the human condition which is also significant: the determination expressed by Darleen's mother when she said that she "pounded it on them: you can do anything you want bad enough." It was this persistence, along with some impulse that she could not ignore, that led Darleen to and sustained her in a re-entry into school. But this does not account for the kind of "operative skill" she brought to the community college. The mechanism by which she began to master at forty what she had failed to grasp at fourteen lies in her ability to use a social intelligence to assist her in achieving her educational goal.

She had set a prodigious task for herself. School demands multiple specialized kinds of literacy, from writing lab notes in biology to composing essays for English. She was the rankest beginner at all of it. How was she going to get the opportunities she needed to learn? From the first day she returned to school, she showed that she understood that some web of relationships formed the heart of the new social group to which she wanted to belong, and she set about tying into this network. She made immediate friends with the tutor who had spoken to her when she arrived; she maintained telephone contact with college staff over several months to assure a place in the basic skills program she wanted to enter. She used these politically powerful links for her learning—a tutor can offer extra help with homework; a teacher can provide additional information during office hours. Once admitted to the basic skills classes, she offered to do small favors like stuffing fliers in envelopes in the office; in exchange, she had the chance to listen to teachers and other students chat from a more "intimate" position. She provided snacks or soft drinks to those working late. She formed alliances that could serve her. By dint of this effort, she broke into the academic community that she wanted to join, and the community college teachers and instructional aides opened their ranks to her.

Intelligence tests do not measure this kind of intelligence, this social intelligence, which Darleen seems to have had. And here, in reconsidering the record of Darleen's early school and family life, I am struck again by the implications of her silence: her inability to use her intelligence to connect into social networks at her school—perhaps it was that, above all else, that pushed her out between the cracks. Like so many underprepared adults in basic skills programs, Darleen had long been shut out of networks with those more literate than herself, net-

works of membership that would have allowed her possibilities to unfold. Working within these networks allowed this development. Although her literacy achievement was low, Darleen's ability to develop literacy with a more experienced teacher was high. Literacy is contagious—you catch it from a teacher. The complexity of the learning network needed to foster this development, the painstaking connections that must be built between what the student brings and what the teacher offers, must become more widely recognized by teachers, researchers, and administrators.

Other concerns that Darleen's story highlights are questions current in the field of rhetoric and composition: Are texts ever "autonomous"? They are, as Louise Wetherbee Phelps suggests (1989), created in response to teachers' assignments, to suggestions for revision, to various readings and rereadings. Through this process, it is possible to see that written language is produced no less collaboratively than are conversations. We can't read Darleen's story without coming, in a new way, to questions about the nature of literacy as it has been, and is now, taught and used in schools.

And finally, Darleen opens a new view on the situation of the underprepared learner in the community college. Once cheerfully open-admission schools, many of these institutions have become anxious—often pressured by Federal Financial Aid mandates—to set up entrance standards and maximum time limits for those in remedial classes. Yet urban two-year colleges, if they are to realize their mandate to provide academic and vocational education for their communities, must recognize, as they make policy, the complexities students like Darleen present. Could a student so fragile have successfully routed herself first to a library literacy program staffed by volunteers, then to adult basic education, and finally arrived at the community college ready to write the college essay? Unless some pretty careful links are put into place among all these institutions—links which are not in place as we face the year 2000—I doubt it.

If the community college has taught Darleen much that she needed to redefine herself as a student, the community college stands to learn a great deal from students like her. Students like Darleen will not go away, and if we offer them what they need, they can become a rich resource in this generation and the next. In times of cutbacks, nay-saying, and exploding technologies that threaten to leave out large segments of our society from the work of the twenty-first century, it is a long shot at best. But in the spirit of Darleen's persistence, her *corazón*, let teachers pass on to teachers, to researchers, to administrators, to

state and federal policymakers, what has been learned in the last generation.

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6 Latina/o College Writing Students: Linguistic, Cultural, and Gender Issues

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The U.S. Census Bureau (1990) has recently noted that Latinas/os[1] are one of the largest and fastest-growing ethnic groups in the United States; because of the relative youthfulness of Latinas/os (10.7 percent are under the age of five, compared with 7.4 percent of non-Latinas/os), their impact on higher education will only continue to grow (pp. 8–9). However, up to now, the participation rates for Latinas/os in higher education have been limited. According to the American Council on Education (1993), the college participation rates of Latinas/os have actually decreased, in contrast to the non-Latina/o population. Much of Latina/o students' college participation has taken place in two-year colleges; in 1991 a majority (55.8 percent) of Latina/o students attended two-year colleges, an increase of 14.2 percent from 1990 to 1991 (p. 9). Because of this high number of Latina/o students, two-year colleges can play a significant role in improving the college success rates for these students.

In this essay I will suggest how writing teachers can help Latina/o college students to succeed in higher education. I will address linguistic, cultural, and gender issues. By helping students "to succeed" in higher education, I don't mean simply "to assimilate"; instead, writing teachers need to help students—and themselves—reflect critically upon the dominant culture and their place in it.

Who Are the Latina/o Students?

Latina/o students are as diverse as any other group of students we may encounter in our writing classrooms. As with all students, we

[1] I will use "Latina/o" throughout this chapter to refer to Americans of Latin American or Mexican ancestry because this label reflects Latinas/os' diverse national origins regardless of language, culture, or race. The use of labels is an ideologically charged issue for many Latinas/os; for one perspective on this issue, see Alarcon (1992).

need to approach them as individuals. This emphasis on individuality is particularly relevant here, for the term "Latina/o" does not refer to a particular race, culture, or language. Latinas/os can include people whose origins can be found in Cuba, Puerto Rico, Mexico, or any Central American or South American country. In discussing Latinas/os as a group, my intention is not to negate the significance of individual differences, only to provide teachers with a starting point for gaining more understanding of their students.

It is important that teachers do begin to understand this group of students, for their numbers are steadily increasing. According to the Census Bureau (1990), in 1989 more than 20 million Latinas/os lived in the U.S.—an increase of 39 percent from 1980 (the non-Latina/o population grew by 7.5 percent). Mexican Americans make up the largest portion—62.6 percent; Puerto Rican Americans constitute the second-largest subgroup (12.7 percent); while Cuban Americans represent 5.3 percent of the total (p. 2). The most recent census report also noted that a majority of the Latina/o population is located in four states, California, Texas, New York, and Florida, with Illinois and Arizona not far behind (p. 3).

As I mentioned earlier, "Latina/o" is a term that signifies diversity rather than homogeneity. Latinas/os constitute a broad range of races, nationalities, economic classes, and political orientations. Some Latinas/os have ancestors who were living in the U.S. before the arrival of the pilgrims, while others are recent immigrants. Many Latina/o immigrants, especially those from Central America and Cuba, have come to the U.S. for political reasons. Those from Cuba were often from the well-educated professional class and have established communities in Miami, where the Cuban culture has been preserved and Spanish is the dominant language. In contrast, many Puerto Rican and Mexican American Latinas/os immigrated to the U.S. for economic reasons, to escape the poverty of their native lands.

In recent years, many Latinas/os have prospered economically. According to the National Council of La Raza, Latina/o buying power increased by 70 percent from 1982 to 1990, almost three times more than for non-Latinas/os ("Hispanics Earn," 1991, 1-A). However, the poverty level of Latinas/os is still higher than for the Anglo population; in 1989, 26.7 percent of Latinas/os lived below the poverty level, compared with 11.8 percent of non-Latinas/os (U.S. Census Bureau, 1990, pp. 10–13). The decreasing high school graduation rates of Latina/o students suggest that this poverty rate will continue to grow.

The variety within the Latina/o population became apparent to me when I began to conduct case studies on six first-generation college

students in El Paso, Texas, a city that is almost 70 percent Latinas/os of Mexican descent. One young woman I studied had been born in Mexico, currently lived in one of the barrios of the city, spoke only Spanish at home, and was receiving pressure from her family to drop out of college. In contrast, one of the other students, a young man, was a third-generation American who spoke no Spanish at all, lived in one of the most affluent parts of the city, and aspired to be an astronaut. Economic class, length of time in the U.S., the language spoken in the home, gender pressures, self-esteem—all of these factors play an important role in how Latina/o students, as with all students, react to higher education.

Linguistic Characteristics

As I have noted, many Latina/o students do not speak Spanish. However, given the recent influx of Latina/o immigrants into the United States, it is likely that teachers will encounter some Latina/o students whose primary language is Spanish; depending upon his or her educational background, a student may only speak Spanish, but not be able to read or write in Spanish. Students whose dominant language is Spanish (rather than students who are truly bilingual) will exhibit errors in their writing that are typical of ESL students from various language backgrounds, such as problems with verb tense, verb formations, word order, sentence boundaries, articles, prepositions, and spelling. Spanish-speaking students in particular may demonstrate interference from Spanish phonology in their orthography. For instance, Spanish speakers may write "seating" instead of "sitting" because Spanish does not have the short *i* sound. It also does not have the vowel sound in "than," so that it is common for Spanish speakers to write "then" instead of "than." (For a more thorough discussion of Spanish phonological interference, see Herrick, 1981).

However, for many Spanish-speaking students, lack of knowledge of written English conventions (common to most developing writers)—not second-language interference—is the cause of most sentence-level errors. This is especially true for students who speak both fluent Spanish and English but have had limited instruction in writing formal English, as is common in areas such as Los Angeles, Miami, New York City, and the U.S.-Mexico border cities. These students are bilingual and bicultural, at home in both Spanish and English discourse communities. In her discussion of the influence of English vernacular on Chicana/o English, Penfield (1981) gives this example of a Latino student's writing:

> Youre life. Living together with a person without been marriade is something that our parents don't accept very well, because they were raise in another way. I think if I hade a girl friend and she would like to live together without getin marriade I would accept and move with her. . . . (p. 75)

As Penfield notes, "raise" and "getin" are probably the result of simply hearing these words spoken but never seeing them written. Other errors, such as "youre" and "marriade," point to a lack of knowledge of English orthography. These errors are not a result of interference from Spanish but, rather, confusion between spoken and written English—interference which inexperienced writers from a variety of backgrounds experience.

Although it is helpful for students to understand the errors they make and to receive instruction in how to avoid making them, placing too much emphasis on errors in the writing classroom can make students perceive writing as the production of correct language, instead of a process of communication between writer and reader. Moreover, rather than simply seeing errors as "bad," teachers need to understand why their students make the errors they do—what errors reveal about students' backgrounds, thinking processes, and writing acquisition. Viewing errors as part of the developmental process of language acquisition can help prevent teachers from discriminating against language-minority students because of their limited-English proficiency. Rather than focusing on what students lack, we need to perceive students who bring other languages to the writing classroom as enriching the classroom community, just as the English language has been enriched by the influx of languages it has encountered.

Cultural Characteristics

The range of language proficiencies among Latina/o students—from those who speak only Spanish, to those who are bilingual in Spanish and English, to those who only speak English—indicates the range of cultural worlds they inhabit. Case studies that I conducted on ten Latina/o students at the University of Arizona and at the University of Texas at El Paso revealed to me aspects of these diverse cultural worlds. For the students I examined, the degree of tension they experienced between the "minority" Latina/o culture and the "majority" Anglo culture—and the students' sense of place as "minorities" within the "majority" culture—greatly affected their reactions to their writing classrooms.

As I mentioned earlier, there is no single "Latina/o" culture, and as a result, generalizing about this group of students can lead to distor-

tions of fact. Nonetheless, teachers interested in knowing more about their students can benefit from research studies that have explored the tensions that can arise when students from traditional Latina/o cultures encounter the norms of the dominant Anglo culture. For instance, research studies have indicated a strong focus on familial and community relationships among Latinas/os; in these relationships, cooperation, loyalty, and interpersonal connections are stressed (see Knight & Kagan, 1977; McCready, 1985; and Moore, 1983). In contrast to these values is the American emphasis on competition, individualism, and independence. In particular, in America the tradition is for young people—especially young men—to leave their family to develop an identity separate from that of their parents. In traditional Latina/o culture, families remain connected through the generations; familial achievement is usually valued more than individual achievement (Martinez, 1985).

Some of these traditional Latina/o values are evident in the description written by Raul, one of the students I examined, about what he thought he would be doing in ten years:

> In ten years I hope to have finished school and be into my fourth year of teaching U.S. history in [my old] high school. Happily married to my working wife. Proud dad to my three year old boy. . . . Be some sort of community leader. To never loose touch with my family and [be] someone who is doing something to repay all the people that got him to where he is right now.

Rather than move away from his community, Raul wants to use his education to strengthen his connections to his community by teaching at the same high school from which he graduated. In an interview with me, he explained that he wanted to coach football at this school in order to help prevent some of the students from joining gangs. Raul was also explicit about his closeness to his family and his desire to have a family of his own. When I asked him why he had decided to go to college, he said, "because my mother said so." Raul laughed when he said this, but he was also serious. He explained that while he had many Anglo friends, only his Mexican friends understood the role that his mother played in his life. This statement supports research that indicates the significance that Latina/o mothers (specifically, their educational achievement rates) have on their children's academic success (Fligstein & Fernández, 1985; Laosa, 1982).

Raul is an example of a bicultural individual with positive attitudes toward both the Mexican culture of his parents and the Anglocentric culture of his school. A second-generation American, Raul speaks Spanish at home, Spanish and English with his friends (sometimes

both at once in a complicated and poetic form of code-switching), and English at his college. His mother's emphasis on education has led him to view his performance in the English-language classroom as a way of pleasing his family through his educational achievement. Because he has attended schools in which Latinas/os are in the majority, he has no sense of being a minority student within the educational system. In his writing classes, he is confident of his ability to express himself in English because it has never seemed like a "foreign" language to him, nor has he felt like a "foreigner" in his writing classroom.

Raul is an example of a bicultural Latino student. Some Latina/o students, in contrast, are monocultural. For instance, another student I studied, Eric, is a third-generation Latino who has completely assimilated into the Anglocentric culture. He wrote that in ten years he sees himself as having "finished flight school and [being] on the way to my dreams. . . . I also hope to be married. I'd like to travel the country and the world with my wife . . . I'm not sure if I'll have any children . . ." He sees himself as leaving his family and community to establish a separate identity. To Eric, Spanish is a foreign language; he speaks a little only because he studied it for two years in high school. He knows his grandparents speak Spanish, but he doesn't see them often; he's also uncertain in which part of Mexico his grandparents used to live. Although Eric checks off "Mexican American" on questionnaires requiring ethnic identity, he is like many third-generation Americans in that his primary identity is with the mainstream culture, and he feels little connection to his original culture.

Students such as Raul, who understands both the Latina/o culture and the mainstream Anglocentric culture and has found a role for himself within both, and Eric, who knows only the Anglocentric culture, have adjusted smoothly to their writing classrooms. However, some Latina/o students, especially those who are recent immigrants, can experience the effects of a cultural mismatch in Anglocentric classrooms. Lupe and Rosa are both examples of Latina students whose cultural orientation isolates them from the norms of the writing classroom. Both of these students' parents were born in Mexico and only recently immigrated to the United States. Because they were ashamed of their English, both students exhibited extreme shyness in the classroom; they would speak only when called upon, and Lupe even spoke with her hand over her mouth to mask what she considered her poor pronunciation. Both students relied heavily on a support system of their siblings and friends to help them get through college. Although, in their writing classrooms, both wrote about ideas and incidents that were important to them, they felt embarrassed about anyone reading

their writing for fear they would be looked down upon. Some of their writing dealt with encounters with racism and poverty. For instance, in an essay about her self-image, Lupe wrote, "I recall the time I was so excited to go to the Junior High School orientation. 'Look here comes another group of greasers,' have you ever heard this line before? That was the welcome a sophomore Anglo boy gave me and my friends. . . . I felt so ashamed to hear this that I felt a big blind covering my face. I felt too embarrassed to look him in the eyes since them." As a result of experiences such as these, she wrote that she was "resentful towards society as well as determined to succeed." Rosa also wrote of experiencing poverty and racism, but most of her lack of self-esteem seemed to derive from her inability to write or speak Standard American English. For instance, concerning assignments in her high school English class, she wrote, "Knowing that I can't read that kind of English, I thought to myself that some kind of dumm person. . . . Most of the things that I read I don't understand." She wrote about peer reviews: "I don't like my friends or classmates to read my writing because I know that I have alot of mistakes on them. I am afraid that they would tiss me about it." Rosa and Lupe are similar to the type of students encountered by Adrienne Rich (1979) when she taught at the City College of New York—students who have had the language of the dominant culture "*used against* them, to keep them in their place, to mystify, to bully, to make them feel powerless" (p. 63). Both Lupe and Rosa came from school systems that lacked a strong bilingual education program, so they had not had the opportunity to perceive themselves as capable communicators in Spanish, much less in English.

Rose and Lupe are examples of students who want to succeed in the mainstream culture but whose identity is rooted in the Latina/o culture. These students are often tentative and isolated in the classroom and can lack the confidence necessary to use language as a way of generating and communicating meaningful ideas. Research has suggested that Latina/o students in general experience more stress in higher education when compared with Anglo students (Quintana, Vogel, & Ybarra, 1991); for students such as Rosa and Lupe, this stress can intensify the insecurity and resentment they already might feel when encountering the dominant culture. Paulo Freire (1987) has written that "the [primary] role of critical pedagogy is to lead students to recognize various tensions and enable them to deal effectively with them" (p. 49). As teachers, we need to bring cultural tensions to the surface in our classrooms so that students can use language to explore and to begin to resolve their relationships to the dominant culture.

These cultural tensions can be addressed when students are introduced to what Freire has called a "problem-posing" curriculum, in which students are asked to reflect upon and critique aspects of their cultural realities. Students can consider issues such as cultural identity, racism, sexism, and economic discrimination in journal writings, class discussions, small-group activities, and formal writing assignments. I have found that even an assignment as simple as "Why I Am Attending College" can lead to cultural insights; students at first tend to assume that their desire for a college education is an individual and/or family decision until they are asked to make connections to cultural norms or expectations. Ultimately, activities such as these can help students become more conscious of their positions within or against the dominant culture, and thus better able to change the culture(s) in which they live. (Later in this essay I will suggest additional pedagogical strategies for helping students to use language to problematize and resolve cultural tensions.)

Gender

Certainly, some of the tensions in writing classrooms experienced by students such as Rosa and Lupe are a result of their gender. Women from a variety of backgrounds often act differently and are treated differently in higher education. According to recent research studies, women tend to talk less than men in classrooms and receive less attention from teachers (Sadker & Sadker, 1985); they tend to avoid going into fields that stress math and science (Mickelson, 1982); and they often lose confidence as they proceed through school (Stake & Rose, 1985). Preliminary research has also suggested that, in writing classrooms, many women prefer to write on topics that are personal and that often concern achieving connectedness to others, in contrast to more impersonal topics that many men tend to choose which demonstrate individual achievement and separation from others (Flynn, 1988; Papoulis, 1990). Moreover, the emphasis on an "objective," even agonistic, stance in traditional writing assignments can interfere with many women's tendencies to write about their personal contexts and to establish a more familiar stance toward their audience (see Annas, 1985; Hunter et al., 1988; and Lamb, 1991). Despite these gender differences, many woman succeed in writing classrooms—but their success requires that they acquire a type of communication that can be more foreign to them than to their male peers. One researcher, Carol Stanger (1987), has referred to this assumption of a different way of communicating as women "cross-dressing" in men's language.

Many Latinas in higher education do even more "cross-dressing" than Anglo female students as a result of experiencing what sociologist Helen Moore (1983) has called "the dilemma of conflicting norms" (p. 46). As noted earlier, Latina/o culture is often more oriented toward cooperation, respect for authority, and the family unit than is the Anglocentric culture. In particular, family responsibilities can interfere with Latinas' efforts to achieve an education (of course, this can happen with other nontraditional students, too). For instance, Rosa (the student discussed earlier) was the oldest child in a large family; she was expected to assume a major portion of the child care and household responsibilities while attending college. Other Latina students might have to miss classes because their grandmother becomes ill, or because they have to attend the funeral of a relative in Mexico. (Male Latino students can also experience family pressures that interfere with educational pursuits—for instance, they might be expected to contribute to the family income rather than attend college.)

Rosa is an example of a Latina student who came from a family where traditional gender and cultural roles had been preserved; her desire to succeed in higher education meant that she had to create for herself a different identity than the one encouraged by her family. Creating this new identity has the potential of enabling Latinas to reach, in the words of anthropologist James Diego Vigil (1988), "sexual equity without sacrificing ethnicity" (p. 80). But the process of reaching sexual equality without losing one's cultural identity can be filled with ambivalence, even conflict. For example, Saundra, another Latina whom I studied, described in writing one incident that led her father to call her a "defensive feminist snob":

> Dad took the liberty of informing me I was the only girl and it was my job as a female to clean the house as well as to help my mother prepare dinner. I would often ask why couldn't the boys help out from time to time, but the only response I got in return was that boys didn't have to do those things. . . . From that moment on I went on a male-hate campaign.

The focus of this "male-hate" campaign was often Latino men. For instance, in an interview, she said that she thought Mexican men were chauvinists; that she sometimes hated to be around her Mexican relatives because the women wait on the men and "whatever men say, it goes"; and that she often gets into debates about feminism with friends who tell her that "I'm trying to be someone I'm not." Sometimes they called her a "coconut"—brown on the outside, white on the inside. In her writing classroom, Saundra was almost too eager to be a good

student; she felt driven to be successful so that she would not end up dependent upon men, as she had seen happen to her mother and to other female relatives.

Sociologist Ruth Zambrana (1988) has written, "How can Latina women make the transition into a world which is different from theirs? How do they reconcile or learn different values and norms without losing who they are? How do they overcome some of the cultural assaults from their peers, the schools, and the like?" (p. 71). Perhaps Saundra's writing class could have helped her make the transition to a new world by affirming her culture—through exposing her to writings by Latina authors and by enabling her to write about the cultural conflicts she was experiencing. By addressing gender and cultural issues, writing classrooms can enrich students' development rather than participate in a narrowing of their personal and social identities.

Pedagogical Strategies

Throughout this essay I have briefly indicated ways in which teachers can address concerns pertaining to Latina/o students—concerns that other nontraditional students often share. My pedagogical goals with Latina/o and other students are the same as Kyle Fiore and Nan Elsasser's (1987) goals for the writing course they founded in a two-year college in the Bahamas; in addition to wanting their students to understand writing as a process,

> We wanted our students to be able to bring their culture, their knowledge, into the classroom. . . . [W]e wanted them to be able to use writing as a means of intervening in their own social environment.

Fiore and Elsasser achieved these goals for their female Bahamian students by having them write about the personal, social, and political issues in their lives. In the following section, I will discuss how addressing such issues can also empower Latina/o students. These issues can be raised in the context of activities that involve collaborative learning, that use culturally oriented reading and writing materials, and that engage students in critical literacy practices. Because of limited space, my pedagogical suggestions do not always take into account individual differences among students; teachers, naturally, need to modify these suggestions according to their students' differing needs.

Collaborative Learning

The benefits of collaborative learning techniques in writing classrooms have been forcefully argued by Kenneth Bruffee (1984), who has explained that "collaborative learning provides a social context in which students can experience and practice the kinds of conversation valued by college teachers" (p. 642). My own experience with collaborative learning strategies has led me to agree that these kinds of conversations help students internalize the types of thinking and the conventions of the discourse community of the classroom. However, I emphasize what Joseph Harris (1989) has recently pointed out: such conversations enable students to add their own voices to this discourse community—so that rather than simply mimicking academic forms, they are contributing their own languages and ways of thinking to the classroom.

Collaborative learning techniques such as peer-review sessions (in which students make suggestions on their peers' drafts) can be effective with many Latina/o students because of the cultural emphasis on cooperation and affiliation. Other small-group activities can also help to stimulate conceptual development, especially if the group members as a whole, rather than simply individual students, are rewarded for their efforts. For instance, students in a group can be asked to analyze a particular aspect of a text and then to report on their analysis to the larger class. Such an activity enables students who are insecure about their language abilities to participate in a nonthreatening format—with only a few other students—rather than be asked to respond alone in front of the whole class. I have found, however, that I must carefully select group members so that shy students are not overwhelmed by more gregarious students. I also monitor these groups to encourage the quieter members to speak their minds. Similarly, to protect insecure students, I am careful to not share an example of their writing that might embarrass them in front of the whole class. Instead, I might ask one student to contribute an idea from his or her writing to the class, and then ask another student to add to that idea. In discussions, my emphasis is often on bolstering similarities among students rather than focusing in on differences, so that students who are keenly aware of their "minority" status—through their language, class, or ethnicity—might be able to position themselves more comfortably within the large group. For example, I might point out similar reflections on a text under discussion or ideas produced in students' drafts which echo each other. This emphasis on commonalities can also help to limit the competitive edge that often occurs in class discussions.

Cooperative learning, then, can enable students to add their ideas and voices to the classroom community in a way that allows them privacy: they do not have to be exposed to the rest of their classmates. Also, they are not competing for their instructor's attention or approval. Additionally, a supportive classroom setting can help students who have been taught respect for authority to perceive their teacher as someone who can be approached for assistance. This can be especially important when personal problems interfere with students' work; if students are intimidated by the instructor, their sense of pride and dignity can prevent them from seeking help.

Culturally Oriented Reading and Writing Activities

Writing teachers who build connections between reading and writing can help students improve their conceptual and linguistic abilities. Writing teachers can also use reading material to help students affirm their cultural backgrounds and to explore their relationships with (or against) the dominant culture. One way of doing this is to juxtapose two texts—one from a minority culture, one from a majority culture—so that students can examine diverse cultural treatments of a common theme. For instance, Rudolfo Anaya's *Bless Me, Ultima* (1972), a young Latino's coming-of-age story, can be read with Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*. Both books explore minority cultures, ways of making meaning, and the development of identity, but in radically different settings. Students can examine different perspectives on similar themes by reading several texts written by the same author, as in Arturo Islas's *The Rain God* (1984) and *Migrant Souls* (1990), which concern ways of dealing with the Mexican and American cultures in border settings. The sexual and social pressures often confronted by Latinas are described poetically in Sandra Cisneros's *The House on Mango Street* (1984) and *Woman Hollering Creek* (1991). Gloria Anzaldúa, in *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987), reveals what it is like to be a lesbian Latina living on the border between the Mexican and Anglo cultures.

These examples of Latina/o texts can also serve as models of different types of writing that can enrich our students' views on the function and form of classroom discourse. Of course, we have a responsibility to teach our students the types of writing that will enable them to succeed in higher education and in the professional world. This goal, however, should not keep us from using other kinds of writing to foster the development of students' voices and insights. Nontraditional forms of classroom writing can also help students better under-

stand traditional forms of writing through the comparison of different text features. But no matter what form they use, students need to feel they can bring their own lives into their writing.

As an example of a writing assignment that encompassed various forms of writing and was oriented around students' personal and social contexts, I will describe a writing unit I have taught to basic writing students from a variety of backgrounds. The unit dealt with family and cultural rituals. We first read about rituals from a variety of cultures, and then I asked students to describe a ritual from their own culture. Some of the Latina/o students wrote about annual pilgrimages to a religious shrine, or the *quinceañera* (coming of age) ceremony for girls, or an annual visit to relatives. These essays were descriptive narratives. I then asked the students to write a profile of a key member in their ritual, to write a poem about their reactions to the ritual, to write a letter to their children persuading them to maintain the ritual, and to write a short research paper concerning the origins and symbology of the ritual. For this last assignment, the students were allowed to use oral interviews as well as library materials for their research. This assignment on rituals served various purposes. It allowed students to explore different forms of writing, it let them understand a particular event through various perspectives, it taught them about an important aspect of their culture, and it affirmed their ability to become the source of knowledge in the writing classroom.

Cultural Literacy

The written assignment just described is an example of one that can help to promote critical literacy. I am using Ira Shor's (1987) definition of this term:

> A critically literate person does not stay at the empirical level of memorizing data, or at the impressionistic level of opinion, or at the level of dominant myths in society, but goes beneath the surface to understand the origin, structure, and consequences of any body of knowledge, technical process, or object under study. (p. 24)

Shor suggests that to obtain such critical literacy, students should study "their language, their society, and their own learning" (p. 24). Such critical literacy is essential for all students—but especially for those traditionally marginalized by educational institutions, who might feel inadequate, or angry, or overwhelmed by what they encounter in their writing classes. Such students need to become their

own ethnographers so that they can reflect upon and write about their native languages and cultures and/or about the culture of the university and their reactions to it. These reflections can become a part of their efforts to come to terms with the tensions involved in seeking higher education. This kind of empowerment that writing can bring about comes slowly, but it comes. For example, one of the students I have referred to in this chapter, Saundra, reflected upon the effect that an essay she wrote about her self-image had on her: "I realized how I felt. . . . I realized things about myself." About her first college writing course, she noted: "I feel more confident. I can speak out now." Raul, another student referred to earlier, commented about his writing class: "I never thought I could be a writer." These comments are not unusual; all of us at some point have students who say things like this. But these statements are significant, for they show that our students (Latina/o or otherwise) can use language in our writing classrooms to better understand, and change, their personal, social, and political lives.

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7 Aliteracy among Community College Students

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Describing herself as a reader, Sarah (not her real name), a student in my children's literature class, wrote: "My reading experiences as a child were minimal. I hated to read. The thought of sitting in one place long enough to finish even a chapter of a book made me feel uneasy."

Comments such as these have fueled my interest in aliteracy, commonly defined as one's having the ability to read but choosing not to. During the past ten years, I have heard said or have read in students' journals such remarks as, "I never read unless I have to" or "Reading has never really interested me." Very few students know the term *aliterate* when they first enter the class; however, by the end of the class, a good many realize for the first time that this is a word that they can use to describe themselves.

My concern over aliteracy is shared by educators and by social and political commentators who from time to time complain about "literacy crises" in our society. Two-year college teachers seem to be particularly concerned. Charged with educating the most varied group of students in higher education, we assume that aliteracy is a more serious problem among our students than among those in four-year colleges. How accurate are our perceptions of our students' reading habits and attitudes? What is the nature of aliteracy among our students? Before addressing these questions, I will attempt to clarify a few misconceptions about aliteracy and provide a definition of the concept.

Examining Popular Notions about Aliteracy

Commentators have remarked that aliterates abound at all levels of society. For instance, at a conference on aliteracy sponsored by the

American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research in 1982, a participant commented on the "multitudes of people who read nothing. They do not buy newspapers, they do not read newspapers, they do not buy books, they do not read books. They read nothing . . ." (Thimmesch, 1984, p. 18). Comments like these are often made without evidence or reference to research data. A few individuals—who have attempted to check the accuracy of such comments or the validity of their own suspicions about the prevalence of aliteracy by conducting surveys of specific populations (e.g., freshmen enrolled in college composition)—have concluded that the problem does exist, but it is not as serious or widespread as they or other critics have assumed (see Lampert & Saunders, 1976; Anders & Cardell, 1977; Taylor 1978).

The conclusion these researchers have reached is not surprising when one considers that complaints about aliteracy generally represent the views of readers or people in education and publishing, most of whom have vested interests in reading. By citing the "decline" in reading activity or the "rise" of aliteracy in society, these commentators imply that there was a time in this country's history when people read more and participated more willingly in literate activities. However, as Tchudi (1980) explains, no "Golden Age of Literacy" ever existed (p. 33). Rather, a look at the history of literacy uncovers a variety of meanings for *literacy*, leading Robinson (1990) to conclude that this proliferation of definitions is "a barrier to clear thinking about the topic" (p. 329).

Although the earliest known meaning of *literate* is "being widely read," since the end of the nineteenth century *literacy* has been reduced to a dichotomy and defined as the basic ability to read and write (Ohmann, 1985; Robinson, 1990). Because of largely successful efforts to teach the masses in this country the "basic skill of reading," vast numbers of people are considered "literate" (meaning: they "can read"). Hence, the number of those who "can read" but appear unwilling to do so seems large. Just as the meaning of *literate* has been simplified to a dichotomy, so, too, has the meaning of *aliterate*. When we say that an aliterate "can read," we imply that there is an agreed standard separating those who "can" from those who "cannot." And when we say that an aliterate does not or will not read, we imply that there is a level of reading activity or willingness to read that we can all accept. What those levels are or should be, no one has ascertained. "Who deserves such a label?" and "Are we using this label too loosely?" are good questions as well.

What can surveys tell us about the reading behavior of Americans? Has reading activity declined in the last two decades? Surveys of the

reading habits of nationally representative samples of the American population reveal contradictory answers (see Sharon, 1973–74; McEvoy & Vincent, 1980; Boorstin, 1984; Lehr, 1985). Survey figures show a rise in adults' total reading time from the early to the late 1970s (Harste & Mikulecky, 1984) and an increase from 1978 to 1983 in the number of readers of books, magazines, or newspapers (Lehr, 1985). However, during the same time span, the percentage of readers among young people aged sixteen to twenty-one declined by 12 percent (Lehr, 1985).

Survey results alone cannot give an accurate picture of aliteracy. We need to base our conclusions about the extent of aliteracy on qualitative research which looks more closely at the lives of individuals whom we would label *aliterate*.

A Comprehensive Definition of *Aliteracy*

Still too new to be in most editions of the dictionary, *aliterate* has been loosely defined by those who have used it. An *aliterate* has been defined as someone *who can read but won't* (a matter of willingness or attitude) *or doesn't* (a matter of behavior). While attitude and behavior may be related, they are two different things. Likewise, aliteracy has been defined specifically in terms of book reading. Equating aliteracy with book reading raises questions about the role other types of texts—magazines, newspapers, and documents—play in aliteracy and why the reading of books is privileged over the reading of other types of material.

A definition of *aliteracy* needs to be based on what we know and understand today about *literacy*. Misconceptions about literacy have added to the confusion surrounding aliteracy. Research in cognitive development, linguistics, communication, and anthropology has contributed insights and perspectives on how individuals read, write, and learn. Contrary to the common view that literacy is a dichotomy, literacy experts now stress that literacy is a complex, multidimensional concept.

Similarly, a definition of *aliteracy* should be comprehensive, taking into account the complexity of the act of reading and the diversity of reading experiences. Hence, my definition of *aliteracy* includes six components: reading attitude, reading behavior, types of texts read, range of reasons for reading, intensity of motivations for reading, and reading ability. These components interact with each other in multiple ways. Figure 1 shows these components as circles which overlap.

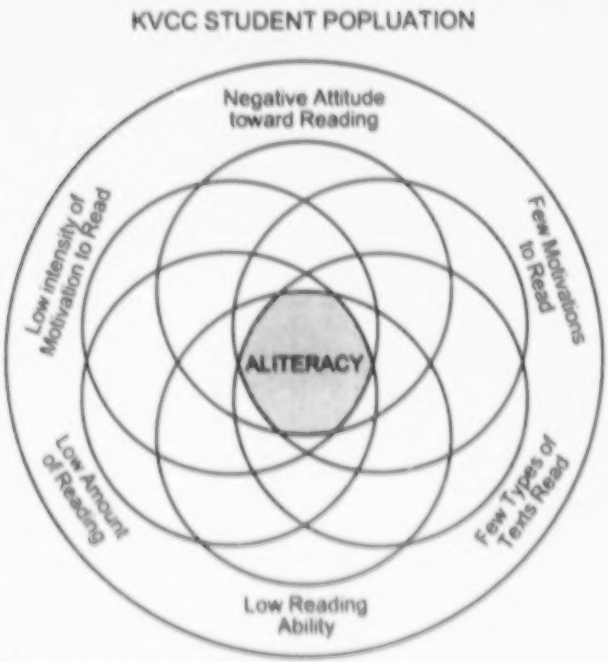


Fig. 1. Overlapping components of aliteracy.

When only two circles overlap or only two components are present, then aliteracy is slight. However, when all the components are present, as shown in the middle where all the circles intersect, aliteracy is extreme.

Each of these components is a continuum, interacting with the others to form a configuration that may be highly individual. For example, a person who reads nothing but romance novels may be considered partly aliterate even though she reads voraciously. Why? In terms of the components of aliteracy, she reads only one type of material, she reads for only one reason, her motivation for reading may be strong for reading romance novels but not for other types of material, and her reading ability may not be adequate for other types of reading.

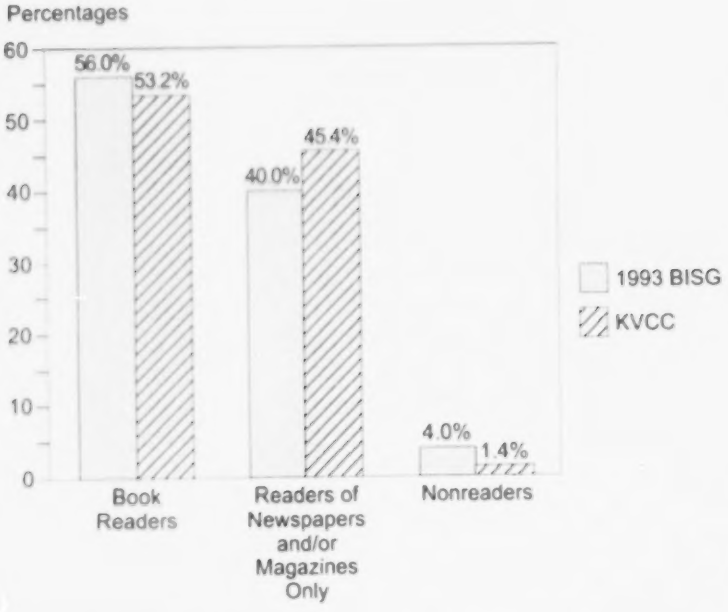
In a nutshell, aliteracy needs to be understood as a complex concept consisting of several elements, each of which is a spectrum. When applied as a label, *aliterate* must be used with caution and with explanations and qualifications.

Research on Aliteracy among Community College Students

To learn more about the extent and nature of aliteracy among community college students, I conducted a survey of 219 students at Kalamazoo Valley Community College (KVCC) in September 1990. KVCC, in Kalamazoo, Michigan, offers technical and transfer courses to approximately 11,000 students, three-fourths of whom are enrolled part-time. The average age of the students is thirty. The students in the survey were in eight classes: four in the English area and four from other departments of the college, such as business and law enforcement. These classes included students at different levels of college, from the developmental to the advanced level. I also interviewed nine students who revealed through the survey questionnaire extremely negative attitudes toward reading and a tendency toward avoidance of reading.

The purpose of the survey was to discover students' perceptions of their reading behavior or habits, reading attitudes, the types of material they read (whether books, magazines, or newspapers), their reasons or motivations for reading, and their reading abilities—elements which my review of the literature on aliteracy and related topics had led me to conclude were involved in aliteracy. The numbers generated by the survey made possible comparisons between this and other similar surveys such as the Book Industry Study Group (BISG) surveys (see Lehr, 1985).

My survey of KVCC students showed that their reading habits are very similar to those of the American adult population as determined by the BISG polls. A look at figure 2 will reveal the similarities between the results of the two surveys. Although the percentage of nonreaders of books, magazines, or newspapers in the KVCC sample is a mere 1.4 percent, the percentage of nonbook readers is 45.4 percent. Drawing from results of BISG surveys, I concluded that nonbook reading is an important indicator of aliteracy, not because book reading is intrinsically superior to, say, magazine reading, but because nonbook reading usually implies the presence of other components of aliteracy. Therefore, I expected that 45.4 percent of the KVCC sample, who indicated that they were nonbook readers, would tend to have other aliterate characteristics. My research data proved this expectation to be correct: Compared to nonbook readers, book readers in the sample tended to perceive themselves as individuals who have more positive attitudes toward reading, who read more types of texts (books, magazines, and newspapers), and who have a greater variety and a higher intensity of



1983 BISG = based on the numbers of respondents who reported reading books, newspapers and/or magazines only, or none of these materials *in the previous six months*. KVCC = based on the numbers of respondents who reported reading books, newspapers and/or magazines only, or none of these materials *in the previous month*. (N=219). BISG data source: Lehr, 1985, p. 170.

Fig. 2. Comparison of BISG and KVCC results.

motivations for reading. Book readers also tended to view themselves as better readers than nonbook readers.

My study confirmed the findings of other studies that gender is a predictor of reading habits and attitudes. Only 39 percent of the males, but 67.7 percent of the females, reported reading a book, wholly or partly, in the past month. Females also reported more favorable attitudes toward reading than did males.

One of the major conclusions of my study is that aliterates *view themselves* as individuals who do not like to read and who avoid reading. This *self-perception* is critical in aliteracy. Asked about it, most of the interviewees explained that they had "school reading" in mind when they indicated that they did not like to read. Many of the stu-

dents who reported that they did not like to read for enjoyment actually read newspapers and/or magazines, a type of reading that they did not consider pleasure reading. Because they had viewed themselves as people who did *not* read and did *not* like to read, based on their definition of reading as *school reading*, they failed to acknowledge the ways in which they did *to some degree* like to read or read for enjoyment.

Sarah, whom I quoted in the beginning of this essay (she was not a part of my study), is an example of this type of student. Her image of herself as a reader differed from her description of her actual reading. Although she had written that she "hated to read," she disclosed the following additional information in a journal entry:

> I grew up on the Dr. Seuss series. I still find enjoyment in reading them today. Nursery rhymes were also a major part of my childhood. As I grew up I became a fan of Judy Blume. I read *Tales of a Fourth Grade Nothing* and *Are You there God, It's me Margaret* at the fifth grade level. Seventh and eighth grade was a busy time for me. My father had cancer and was extremely ill during this period in my life. I spent a great deal of time in hospitals and grew fond of V.C. Andrew, *Flowers in the Attic* series.

Implications

One conclusion that emerges from this research is that those who are viewed or who view themselves as aliterates may read more and may like reading more than they report. This conclusion is both important and surprising. Researchers have noted that people generally view reading as socially desirable and tend to overreport their reading activities (Nell, 1988). However, students' view of themselves as unwilling readers seems to outweigh their desire to be socially accepted.

It is easy to argue that because about half of the American population and of the KVCC sample are not book readers, aliteracy is a serious problem. Because nonbook reading tends to be accompanied by low reading volume, fewer types of material read, and more negative attitudes toward reading, avoidance of books may be a part of a general pattern of information avoidance (see studies in newspaper readership—e.g., Fedler and Taylor, 1978) and, consequently, is a detriment to individuals and to society.

Is aliteracy reversible? Some people who have aliterate habits and attitudes may not want or may not feel the need to change. From their

perspective, aliteracy may not be as serious or detrimental as those who read and those who support reading claim. For instance, students in my classes have contended that aliteracy is a matter of choice and that one can satisfy one's informational and recreational needs through means other than reading. At the same time, because of the prevalent belief in this culture that reading is socially desirable, students who consider themselves aliterate tend to feel bad about themselves. Many believe that their reading habits and attitudes have affected their schooling and have led to lower grades. One of the students I interviewed remarked that if he read more, he would be a better person. Thus, because of the social and intellectual (even moral) values associated with reading, students, given the opportunity and encouragement, may choose to try to overcome their aliteracy. Writing in their journals about themselves as readers, students in children's literature classes often express a desire to conquer aliteracy. For instance, after a class discussion on "why we read," a discussion which culminated in a chalkboard full of reasons for and benefits from reading, a student wrote:

> I've never been one to take reading seriously. I always knew it was necessary, but never as valuable as I realized during this discussion. I have not been able to find a lot of time to read. The majority of reading that I do is for classes, because I "have" to read. I wish I would read more. I would like to read for all of the reasons we discussed in class.

In the essay portion of the questionnaire that I used in my survey, many students who didn't like to read or who didn't read for enjoyment when they were younger revealed that they learned to like reading and to read more as they grew older. Some wrote that they discovered pleasure reading for themselves after they left school. Some blamed teaching methods they had encountered in school for their lack of desire to read. Here is one story shared by a student who achieved success in reading outside of school settings:

> I used to be a very poor reader. We were always tested for skills in grammar in junior high school. I felt very pressured and could not read fast enough. Consequently, I dislike reading and never did so on my own.
>
> After I married, I began reading a few novels for entertainment while my husband was out of town. I really began to enjoy it when I could do so at my own pace. Now I read all the time and love it. Plus my speed has greatly improved.

For many students, reading interest was sparked by an opportunity to read what they wanted. Free to choose, they found material they were

interested in, a discovery which led to more reading, as well as better skills in reading.

Recommendations

Many of the students' explanations of the origins of their reading attitudes and habits coincide with explanations given in the professional literature about the possible causes of aliteracy: home environment and instructional methods and materials used in school (Winkel, 1988). We may not be able to do much about our students' home environments, but we wield tremendous power in their school environments. If it is true that aliteracy is a by-product of some of our teaching practices and that aliterates are "hidden failures of education" (Cullinan, 1989, p. 6), then we must do all we can to prevent or reverse the trend.

To start, we need to become aware that many students come to our classrooms with firm perceptions that they do not like to read. Consequently, we need to encourage students to examine and question their beliefs and assumptions about reading. (An approach I have used is to ask them to write about themselves as readers—how they have come to be the readers that they are. Such reading autobiographies are the basis of *Voices of Readers: How We Come to Love Books* [Carlsen & Sherrill, 1988].) By examining what students reveal about themselves as readers, we can help them understand their misconceptions about reading. They may define *reading* in terms of school reading—the reading of textbooks and the answering of questions after reading. They may think that reading is a monolithic activity and that they lack the ability to discriminate between types of and purposes for reading. They may not understand the real nature of their reading problems (for example, one of the students I interviewed described her reading problems by saying she had trouble pronouncing and spelling words). Those who say that they do not like to read because they are not interested in reading textbooks need to consider the possibility that the problem may be caused by the material and not just by their lack of motivation or skills. Their idealized view of the "good reader" as someone who is proficient in all types of reading should be challenged. They need to be aware of the false dichotomies in their thinking about reading: that readers are either "good" or "bad," that people either "love" or "hate" reading, and that reading for information is in opposition to reading for pleasure (some pleasure-readers prefer nonfiction to fiction). They need to disabuse themselves of the notion that reading for pleasure

only applies to book reading; certainly, reading covers a multitude of texts, including magazines and newspapers, and a variety of reasons and purposes (Heath, 1980; Taylor & Dorsey-Gaines, 1988).

Moreover, it is time to abandon teaching practices that have been known to turn students away from reading and to replace them with approaches that encourage reading. One approach that has been repeatedly criticized by students is the excessive and misguided use of critical analysis. Students talk about excruciatingly boring and "meaningless" hours of class time devoted to "dissecting" a Shakespeare play or a Dickens novel. Some teachers who use this approach assume that there is one correct reading of a text and do not give enough consideration to the students' idiosyncratic interpretations, a sure method to silence students and to make them read passively and with little personal involvement. Many more English teachers need to be exposed to the reader-response or transactional approach to reading (Rosenblatt, 1978; 1983), a view of reading that validates the students' personal and spontaneous responses to a text. A host of teachers who have used reader-response strategies have documented improvements in students' reading attitude and interest in literature (see Corcoran & Evans, 1987). Among them, Brown (1987) argues that it is "our job as teachers to encourage those who do read to read more and those who don't read to begin reading." She also admits, "It is hard to make the move from seeing ourselves as teachers of literary texts to teachers helping students become better readers" (p. 97). Reading about the experiences of teachers who have made that move is one way of making the transition easier.

Teachers of all disciplines can promote or discourage reading simply through their choices of textbooks or reading materials. The reliance on textbooks in teaching, Chambers (1983) reasons, has created reluctant readers, students who associate "reading" with dull, plodding textbooks. My research provides additional evidence for this contention: Students who expressed negative attitudes toward reading tended to define reading in terms of textbook reading. Students and instructors generally agree that textbooks and other "educational" materials are not among the most interesting materials we can read. What can we, as teachers, do to counteract the negative feelings associated with textbooks? Some teachers use trade books in place of or as supplements to textbooks. At KVCC, for example, instructors Bill Trush and Paul Millikan have, for years, used trade books to supplement anthropology or history textbooks. They report positive comments from students about the trade books they have assigned. Some students have asked them to recommend other books they could read.

When such a happy event occurs, teachers should be ready with a list of recommended titles!

Another approach is to allow students to choose what they can read. Readers who choose what they read develop "ownership" of what they read (Brown, 1987, p. 95), a feeling that stimulates more reading. Some courses have more built-in flexibility than others for allowing students to choose; for example, in literature classes, students can be given a choice of novels or short stories to read. Despite my misgivings about using a bulky, forbidding textbook in children's literature, I recently decided to use one. When I allowed students to choose which eight of the twelve chapters in the textbook to read and to write about in their journals, I found that, compared with those who were not given the choice in the previous semester, these students generally responded more favorably to the textbook. Many students commented that they liked not only being able to choose the chapters they read, but also being able to decide the order in which they read them. Similarly, teachers of history can offer students a list of historical novels to choose from to supplement the history textbook. Through novels or nonfiction trade books, students can gain perspectives about the events of a period and the lives of individuals affected by those events—perspectives deeper than those provided by textbooks. Choosing types of books that students would want to read as well as giving them a choice on what to read (in other words, letting them choose how they would like to learn about a particular subject matter) are not only effective teaching methods but are also good antidotes to aliteracy.

Ultimately, educators have to take the lead in redefining literacy to include its broad uses and functions and in persuading our students to share this definition. As teachers, we need to be aware of our assumptions about reading and literacy. Do we think of literacy as the mechanical skill of reading and writing or as a *lifelong process* of learning to read and write different kinds of texts for different purposes? Neilson (1989) defines literacy as "the process of learning to participate in necessary and personally important social, intellectual, and political contexts" (p. 10). Literacy acquisition, literacy scholars tell us, is complex and ongoing. A student recently told me that she heard about a high school teacher who "bragged" that he had not read a book since he finished college. As educators, we have the capacity, through words *and* actions, to influence students toward or away from reading. By examining our own assumptions about reading and by understanding how we have become the kind of readers that we are, we can help

students like Sarah to question their beliefs about themselves as readers and help them to grow toward greater literacy.

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II Curriculum

8 Today for Tomorrow: Program and Pedagogy for 21st-Century College Students

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Several years ago, the dean of our campus presented us with a unique opportunity. "Ignore the system," he said. "Design the ideal program for our students who want to pursue a baccalaureate degree." A committee of interested faculty from political science, mathematics, physical education, developmental reading/teacher education, and English leaped at the chance to find a better way to enhance our students' learning. We created a multidisciplinary freshman-year program called Today for Tomorrow: Foundations for Success (T for T) for students with potential for academic success but without the background to fully benefit from baccalaureate study, and we developed an active learning model that has altered our approach to teaching and learning.[1]

Student Profile

We began by characterizing our students and their academic backgrounds. As a two-year regional campus of a midwestern university, the campus attracts many students who are the first in their families to enroll in college. Few of them planned on higher education when they were in high school; their average age is in the mid-twenties; nearly all of them work full- or part-time; nearly two-thirds are female—in effect, our so-called nontraditional student profile parallels that of community colleges nationwide. We realized that, for the most part, our students do not come to us academically oriented, and they are often more interested in job training than in baccalaureate education. Even those students who followed a college preparatory curriculum in high school are frequently underprepared for the academic challenges of

college. For the most part, our students come from underfunded rural and small-town districts, and few have had the extensive exposure to the wider culture which is so helpful in college-level work. We knew that our students experience conflict when their values clash with such generally accepted academic concepts as evolution and cultural diversity. We wanted a challenging program and a pedagogy that would significantly decrease the gap between our students' experiences and the expectations of the academy, thus increasing their chances for academic success.

Demographers tell us that, in the upcoming decades, more and more students will look like today's typical community college students. The number of students traditionally aged and traditionally prepared for college is decreasing; the number of adult students is growing. While in 1970, 14 percent of male students and 16 percent of female students were over the age of thirty, the Bureau of the Census projects that, by 1995, these percentages will increase to 28 percent of male students and 38 percent of female students. An added challenge will be increases in minority student populations: by the year 2,000, nearly one-third of the entire college-age population will be from minority groups (Sevier, 1992).

Our experience teaching and advising our students told us that they often need systematic, carefully planned and delivered academic and social support if they are to benefit fully from college work. We knew that few of them connect concepts and skills learned in one course with those presented or required in others. The campus already had a successful developmental education program for those students who need extra attention so that they can bring their basic skills up to speed, so our program focused on those who placed, for the most part, into freshman-level courses. The nature of our students meant that the program needed to address the student holistically in a truly developmental manner.

T for T Program

The theoretical base for our plans was the developmental theory created by Donald Drum and his colleagues at the University of Rhode Island (Drum, 1980). Their model identifies seven areas of development at three different levels (see table 1.) Most of our students are at the basic level in the areas of cognitive structures, aesthetic development, moral reasoning, and social perspective; some are at the expansive level in identity formation, physical self, and interpersonal relatedness. Describing students this way permitted us to establish one

Table 1: Student development—some modes and dimensions

Areas of Development	Levels of Development		
	Basic	Expansive	Refined
Cognitive structures	Simplistic	Relativistic	Reflective
Aesthetic development	Instilled preferences	Broadened appreciation	Enhanced sensitivity
Identity formation	Conforming	Experimental	Intentional
Physical self	Unintentional practices	Selective management	Personal responsibility
Moral reasoning	Externalized locus	Internalized locus	Integrated
Interpersonal relatedness	Self-centered	Role-dominated	Intimate
Social perspective	Ethnocentric	Culturally relativistic	Anthropocentric systems

(Source: Drum, 1980, p. 25).

fundamental goal: to meet our students where they are and to provide for them the kinds of experiences that encourage development in all areas. From the beginning, therefore, the committee chose to focus on the whole student, devoting as much thought to affective concerns as to cognitive development.

The curriculum, driven entirely by student needs rather than institutional priorities, centers on a yearlong multidisciplinary core course, the "Foundations of Modern Thought." Designed specifically for the program, this team-taught course introduces students to eight major concepts through a case study approach. Support courses created for the program include "Critical Reading and Thinking" and "Values and Knowledge," a course exploring values in relation to knowledge and learning. "University Orientation," the freshman English sequence, "Political Analysis," and physical education were modified to support T for T. Students in the program are in all of these courses together, but they separate for mathematics, primarily because they require different courses based on our basic skills assessment results and their declared majors.

Grant-supported field trips to acquaint students with the broader culture are included in T for T.[2] Some of these are tied directly to course material, such as a visit to a planetarium, when the topic of study is the development of the heliocentric concept of the universe, or a trip to the theater to see a play being studied in English. Others expose students to opera, a symphony, or a ballet. For many of our students, a field trip is a first-time visit to a large city, a research library, or a museum. Reaction papers and journal entries tell us that these trips are valuable for students, even, if occasionally, one sleeps through the opera.

The program emphasizes communication skills by using a whole language approach. The readings assigned across classes vary from the personal essay to primary research reports and from poetry to fiction. Writing is used in all courses, from writing-to-learn exercises and journals to formal essays. Students also deliver oral reports throughout the year, and a summary of their primary research project for a student version of a professional conference serves as a capstone experience. Collaborative learning activities are built in to every course. Academic survival skills—for example, asking questions, adjusting to instructor style, time management, test taking, and information retrieval—are stressed throughout the year.

For students to learn the skills we know are valuable, we needed to build a community of active learners to create trust and support for the risks we encourage students to take in their learning. The program lays the foundation for community with an orientation day, before classes begin; this allows students and faculty to meet and also provides time to administer the Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory of the Strong Vocational Interest Blank and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator inventories for discussion later in the semester. Once classes begin, formal bonding efforts are primarily the responsibility of physical education. Team games, camping, and whitewater rafting draw students closer together. The seminar-like classes, the topics studied, and the active learning model used make such a community feel natural as well as necessary.[3]

Pedagogy: The Active Learning Model

The active learning model begins each new unit with an exercise to access prior schema.[4] First, students brainstorm, freewrite, or respond to provocative statements about the topic. The results are shared with the class in an uncritical manner. While such material is often erroneous, getting the misconceptions out in the open is the first step toward

learning. Early in the program, the instructor collects and summarizes students' ideas; later, students willingly read their ideas out loud. Early in the year, students generate few ideas; by the second semester, they easily fill a notebook page in just a few minutes.

The next step in the process involves new information. All the traditional means of imparting information are used: lectures, reading, films, etc. Students also give oral presentations; here they are responsible for teaching some defined aspect of the topic to their classmates. Students are required to keep readings and notes in an orderly manner; they are encouraged to interact with the reading assignments by marking them, reacting to ideas and facts, and writing out questions. Their notebooks are collected at the end of every unit. Collaborative group work permits students to discuss and manipulate the new information as they perform well-defined tasks.

Each unit closes before all questions are answered and while many more are surfacing. Students end a topic or unit by reviewing what they have learned (in an exam and/or a paper), what they still need to learn, and by reacting in terms of their own beliefs and values. Ideally, students would learn the material by internalizing it and adjusting their schema to incorporate it. In reality, internalizing might be impossible with some subjects that challenge too directly students' preexisting schema. For example, a student with a strong fundamentalist religious background is not expected to accept or internalize the concept of evolution.

In such cases, our goal is to show the student that one need not believe to learn the material and that emotional distance from a topic is sometimes necessary for learning to take place. The ability to learn about a topic that challenges one's basic values is a necessary skill for our students, because many of them will experience this kind of cognitive dissonance in science, psychology, sociology, political science, literature, and history classes. This skill is so important that, throughout the curriculum, we have created opportunities for this kind of clash of ideas and values to happen in our "safe" environment. Sample concepts that frequently challenge our students' beliefs include racism, censorship, and the notion that language affects perceptions of reality. Without suspending belief to learn material that conflicts with it, our students would be lucky to survive the college experience.

Connections among Courses in T for T

The interplay between courses is most easily explained through an example. A Foundations unit in the middle of the second semester is

entitled "The Scientific Way of Knowing Is the Universally Acceptable Basis for Statements of Fact." The case studied is scientific investigation of racial prejudice, leading to a look at the first social science testimony accepted by the Supreme Court in *Brown v. Board of Education*.

Students begin the unit by writing and sorting facts and values about race, as well as looking at what they know and how they feel about school integration. They write about the benefits and problems as they see them. Students and faculty use this information to establish a baseline from which to work. This starting point is also revisited at the end of the unit. Students then learn about the development of segregation by reading cranial capacity studies, Jim Crow laws, *Plessy v. Ferguson*, how "separate but equal" translated into practice in the public schools, and *Brown v. Board of Education*. They also read sociological studies from the 1950s about integration in the workplace, race relations in the coal fields, and psychological studies of children's perceptions of race. These readings and Jonathan Kozol's *Savage Inequalities* (1991) lead students to think about school integration among the largest city district in our area and the suburban schools nearby.

During this Foundations unit, in "Values and Knowledge," students read newspaper and magazine reports about racism on campuses, prejudice and human nature, and hate crimes. They are asked to look at the values and experiences of others as well as their own regarding gender, regional, ethnic, and religious prejudice.

In "Political Analysis," students work on their own primary research study on some aspect of insularity; reading the sociological and psychological research reports in Foundations not only illuminates research methodology, but it also models primary-research report writing.

Simultaneously, in English II, they are reading poetry and short stories by African American authors and working on their research report. They also receive help creating the oral report that they will give about their primary research.

The connections among courses are strong and consciously planned by faculty. Students bring information from one class to another and have cross-class discussions so often that they forget in which class a specific topic or idea originated. When this happens, faculty feel very successful.

Outcomes

T for T has proven itself beneficial to students who stay the course. Surveys completed after two and five years indicate that students

retain and continue to use the learning model—they question, discuss, use a notebook/journal, and actively engage with ideas in their courses. Some students experience frustration with "regular" students who do not speak in class or with instructors who leave little room for student involvement. Of those who complete the program, 67 percent continue to pursue the baccalaureate degree and have graduated or are still in school. At the end of each year, students report to outside evaluators an increased tolerance for the ideas of others; improved reading, writing, speaking, organizational, and study skills; increased self-confidence; an awareness of their own values and how they were and are shaped; and a broadened sense of opportunities and potentialities. Most adult learners recognize the value of T for T while they are enrolled; traditionally aged students, however, often discover the real value after completing the program.

An outcome we did not anticipate when we created the program was the positive effect it would have upon those of us who teach in it. First, it gave us a greater sense of colleagueship, which has created a number of collaborative papers, workshops, and presentations. Second, it brought us together formally to discuss students and their difficulties, which made all student problems concrete and personal rather than abstract. Of course, the success of the active learning model changed forever the way we teach our courses; even in the "content" courses we teach, we make students more responsible for and actively engaged in their own learning. There is a spillover effect upon the entire campus as faculty members who don't teach in T for T tell us that they recognize our alumni in their sophomore-level classes because they ask questions and easily engage in discussion. Our excitement with the pedagogy has resulted in formal and informal discussions with other faculty members, and many of them have incorporated elements of the active learning model as well. Cross-disciplinary collaboration is expanding, and new ways are being sought to benefit more students from what we've learned in T for T.

However, despite the success of T for T, we have difficulty recruiting new students each year. While we limit class size to twenty, the average fall class is about sixteen. The concept represented in this type of education is quite foreign to our students. We need to identify those students who truly need an enriching experience, who can enroll full-time, and who can apply the program's courses to their majors. Many of the students who are willing to try the program know enough to be concerned about their chances for academic success; some are intrigued by the idea of community and support; yet others are interested in the field trips. Once students are recruited, however, there is no guarantee that they will remain for the full year.

The retention rate in the program (68 percent) is better than the overall rate of campus retention (50 percent). But an attrition rate of 32 percent over six years is still disappointing. Some students, about 4 percent, drop out early in the first semester, deciding college is not for them at the present time. About 15 percent learn from others who are not in T for T that there are ways to "get through" without the hard work we expect of them; they drop out of the program at midyear but remain in school. Other students—some 13 percent—don't persist because of family problems, illness, or financial difficulties—the very reasons all two-year college students give for stopping out.

Conclusion

Despite the difficulty of recruiting students, the success of those who complete the program has committed us to continuing the essential T for T when our grant ends. We think it and other programs driven by student needs provide the best chance for students like ours to succeed in an academic world that was designed long ago for students who don't exist at many colleges. As we approach the next century, we can expect more students who will not benefit much from traditional cattle-pen lecture classes in which content is king. Indeed, there's some doubt that students ever learned as much as they might have from such a "banking" model of education. It is true that students can memorize facts for an exam. However, we contend that we owe students more than just content to be memorized. Instead, we want them to learn how to learn, and that knowledge lasts a lifetime. The chief beneficiary of traditional lower-division education seems to have been the institution of higher learning: it could maximize income through large lecture courses and learning be damned. We suggest that programs like ours will become increasingly necessary if we are to provide an educated population ready to accept twenty-first-century challenges; but in order to create them, the traditional institutional culture and cosmology must be rethought, circumvented, and, ultimately, remodeled. A new student-centered worldview can and should begin in the two-year college.

Notes

1. We had in common an openness to learning from one another, irrespective of disciplinary boundaries; an abiding faith in the value of liberal education; and a commitment to the process of learning, rather than just content-area expectations. We were ourselves academic risktakers who

realized that our kind of work might not be valued by the university as a whole, and we were willing to challenge an institution that privileged traditional disciplinary separation. While we are careful to recruit students whose majors permit credit for most of the courses in T for T, we have not been successful in gaining liberal education requirement status for the Foundations course. Curiously, other universities accept all credits from the program; our own requires that students petition for liberal education credit and limits the number to six for the eight-credit Foundations course.

2. The Ohio Board of Regents has supported T for T with Productivity Improvement and Academic Challenge Grants. Grant money has increased library holdings and has supported faculty development, student publications, and speakers as well as funding field trips.
3. Curiously, the sense of community extends to other cohorts. A "we survived T for T" mentality draws together students currently enrolled in the program with "alumni," who frequently return to make us aware of their progress. "Alumni" who are taking courses on our campus willingly meet with the current year's T for T students to share their perspectives on the program.
4. Because we wanted to design our pedagogy according to current knowledge of adult learning theory and critical thinking, core faculty members participated in the University of Chicago's 1985 five-day workshop, "Cognitive Frameworks and Higher-Order Thinking." The active learning model is based upon what we learned at the workshop from cognitive psychologists and philosophers.

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9 Writing Everybody In

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When Montgomery College and four other Maryland community colleges engaged in projects to bring recent scholarship on women and minorities into the curriculum, they were participating in the continuous pattern of change that has characterized American higher education for over three centuries. These projects are significant to community college teaching, especially the teaching of English, for three reasons: their subject matter coincides with the community college student body; their principles acknowledge the community college teaching situation; and their results include expanded uses of writing and attention to language in many disciplines. Participating faculty were reminded of the power of language to shape thinking.

Curriculum Change

Change is a constant in this nation's college curriculum. Since the early eighteenth century, the curriculum has changed continuously—though usually slowly and often contentiously—to accommodate new knowledge, new ways of conceiving and transmitting knowledge, and new student populations. The expansion of the curriculum has always paralleled and continues to parallel the democratization of both the student population and the system of higher education. The fundamental movement is well known: From the early clerical/classical schools with their small, selected numbers of young, male, nearly all white students to today's great plenty of all kinds and sizes of institu-

tions, serving men and women in all adult age groups from the multiple cultures that comprise the nation.

Changes in curriculum eventually followed the expansion of the student population and the expansion of knowledge itself. In the late nineteenth century, the founding of women's colleges and the limited enrollment of women into major colleges and universities led to the development of new fields, such as home economics and social work. In the late 1940s, the phenomenon of mass education, largely attributed to the introduction of the G.I. Bill and the establishment of a national network of community colleges, markedly expanded the student population not only by numbers but, more importantly, by social demographics. Working-class and minority veterans, encouraged by the G.I. Bill, enrolled in colleges and universities and changed the curriculum by their experiences and insights. Their interests were honed by the war as well as by their unprivileged backgrounds. They demanded a serious, practical course of study that prepared them for advanced study or good careers. Many were married men; reluctant or unable to become typical undergraduates, they were probably the original nontraditional students. And many of them went to their local community colleges. Then, in the 1960s and 1970s, desegregation and gender equity regulations led to minority studies and women's studies programs. Most recently, the assertion that knowledge is socially constructed expanded the curriculum by challenging the status quo and by questioning the claim of objectivity. This pattern of growth continues, with the interaction of scholarship, student populations, and curriculum reform ongoing—at times quietly, at times controversially.

Curriculum Projects

About eighty-five colleges and universities have participated in serious efforts to transform the curriculum so that it reflects the experiences and contributions of women and minorities. Given the strong links between this effort and community college demographics, it seems that more community colleges should be involved. So far, these projects have included community colleges in California, colleges in the Rocky Mountain/Western States projects, colleges in New Jersey as part of that state's Transformation Project, and the Maryland colleges that are the focus of this essay. Montgomery College is fortunate to have had enough interest, support, and leadership from faculty and administrators for involvement in two projects, one of its own and

then the larger collaborative effort between Maryland colleges and Towson State University.

The first curriculum transformation project at Montgomery College was the Balancing the Curriculum Institute, a six-week summer project in 1987 during which twelve self-selected faculty agreed to study a set of readings gathered by the institute director, to revise a unit of a course, to critique one another's revisions, and to again revise the unit. Faculty from art history, biology, chemistry, computer science, English, history, psychology, and sociology were funded by the college; these instructors received a stipend and a book allowance. This project was repeated the following summer, attracting another twelve faculty.

The second project, called the Towson State University/Maryland Community Colleges Project, involved six institutions and took place over four semesters and one summer, therefore demanding a large amount of coordination and planning. It was co-directed by the Montgomery College institute director and the two Towson State women's studies faculty who had directed a three-year curriculum transformation project at their university. Forty-four faculty from five community colleges were grouped into five discipline-based workshops—Biology and Allied Health, Composition and Literature, Fine and Visual Arts, History and Philosophy, and Sociology and Psychology. Faculty were committed to revising a course, teaching it, and then revising it again in response to their classroom experiences. They also invested much energy in sharing the content of their revised courses and their inclusive pedagogical approaches with colleagues from their own and other colleges. Their experiences were organized as a monograph, *Community College Guide to Curriculum Change* (Hedges, Goldenberg, & Coulter, 1990). The Fund for Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE) supported the project extensively by funding the three directors, the campus and workshop coordinators, the consultants, the planning and summer retreats, the book allowances for all participants, and by providing released time for some of the participants. The colleges provided the rest of the participants with a course reduction for three consecutive semesters.

While each of the five community colleges represents a distinct population, among them they depict the character of the community college student body nationwide. One campus is primarily urban and African American, and 72 percent of its enrollment is women; three are suburban, with white, international, immigrant, and African American students all visibly present; the other campus is less racially diverse but serves rural students as well as urban and suburban residents. In total, these colleges enroll 60 percent women and significant numbers of older students, especially adults "returning"—often as single par-

ents (mothers) for training or retraining. Montgomery College, the flagship college of the larger collaborative project by virtue of its previous curriculum reform project, enrolls 15 percent of all the African American students in Maryland community colleges, 53 percent of the Hispanic, 50 percent of the Asian, 25 percent of the physically challenged students, and leads the state in the number of students taking English for Speakers of Other Languages.

Principles

These projects were based on seven principles that are important to any substantial curriculum transformation project in a community college. First, review of relevant scholarship and research is the essential starting point. Community college students have as much right to academic currency as university students, but because the community college teaching load does not provide incentive for research, faculty often need and welcome the opportunity to update themselves and to provide solid, newly conceived information to the students (Goldenberg & Kievitt, 1988).

Second, a focus on pedagogy is vital. Community colleges are teaching institutions, so good community college faculty are concerned about effective teaching. Because of the nature of these projects, feminist pedagogy had to be defined, discussed, and practiced. Feminist pedagogy creates active learning, uses as much collaboration as possible, respects every student as a learner, expects students to assume responsibility for learning—ideas common to the writing-across-the-curriculum movement as well as to the community college mission. It is, in a word, a pedagogy of empowerment. The projects modeled this kind of pedagogy: workshops were participatory, faculty actually changed courses rather than simply listening to presentations, they shared their work, and they were required to keep and submit journals tracing their work and thinking as they reformed their course or courses.

Third, changes must be appropriate to introductory courses and, simultaneously, introductory courses must be inclusive, accurate, and up to date. Introductory surveys establish the boundaries and key points by which students come to see the nature and scope of a subject. The language of a subject, the significance of its content, the influence of the subject on other subjects both current and past, the relevance of the subject in today's world, its major and minor issues—all are packaged in the introductory course, the staple of community college teaching. Today, students need to have the full view of a subject pro-

vided by the multiple vision that comes from scholarship which does not ignore gender, race, class, sexual preference, and ethnicity.

Fourth, both faculty and colleges must make substantial commitments. In these projects, faculty were compensated and were also accountable. They had to attend and participate; they had to submit revised courses; they had to keep and turn in journals, which showed their engagement and also evaluated all aspects of the project. Tight budgets make it difficult for colleges to find resources, but significant curriculum reform cannot occur without institutional support/funding.

Fifth, multiple views must be respected. The act of incorporating new paradigms reminds us that knowledge is constructed by people, that people are shaped by the knowledge that they study, that knowledge is usually expressed in language that cannot be fully accurate, and that the reformulation of knowledge is constant and continual.

Sixth, projects are only beginnings. Curriculum reform is a continuing process. Follow-up sessions for reports on how course revisions worked and dissemination of revisions to other faculty need to be arranged. Participating faculty need opportunities to take revisions to the next stage.

Seventh, significant curriculum reform usually occurs in stages. Because these projects concentrated on scholarship on women and minorities, they followed a variation of the stage theories developed by McIntosh, Schuster and Van Dyne, Tetrault, and others, all of which provide useful tools by which to evaluate the level of reformulation of a course.

Stage Theory

These projects defined their stages as integration, transformation, and reconceptualization. Further, it was determined that a course is circumscribed by its content, language, and pedagogy, which are the components of all courses. At each of the three stages, the instructor considers content, pedagogy, and language, asking the same set of questions at each stage: Where are the women and minorities? Why are they missing? What are the effects of exclusion? How would this course change if it reflected the scholarship on women and minorities? How can the language be more accurate? How can I teach more effectively? Each question takes on a different texture and emphasis at stages two and three as the instructor gains perspective and information from each preceding stage.

The objective of the first stage, integration, is to begin consciously to use gender and race as categories of analysis and as subject matter worthy of study. The instructor will add material on women and minorities; add assignments that send students to multicultural and feminist sources; add awareness to the classroom through announcements of new books, lectures, or films; and eliminate sexist and racist language, metaphors, stereotypes, and norms. The instructor also moves toward feminist pedagogy, emphasizing collaborative learning. At the end of this stage, the course is changed because material on and by women is added, but the broad outlines and boundaries of the course remain the same.

In the second stage, transformation, the students and instructor develop bibliographies that include works by and about women and minorities. Here the course is changed by what is added *and* deleted. Instructors use the works and women and minorities as exemplars. We reperiodize and reorganize a course, fully incorporating the experiences of women and minorities. We ask, were the Dark Ages dark for women? How did "manifest destiny" apply to American minorities? We include nontraditional genres like letters and diaries, and, in that process, validate forms that have been excluded. We change the course topics to reflect the fullness of the subject. In literature, for example, we include letters and orally transmitted folk tales; Linda Brent might *replace* Frederick Douglass in a crowded course outline. At this stage, the course is essentially transformed in that the key elements have been changed: criteria of what is "good" are redefined; recovered major contributors like Lady Byron, Caroline Herschell, Aphra Behn are included, not added.

In the third and final stage, the instructor reconceptualizes the course and challenges all assumptions: language, content, organization of knowledge, the politics and power structures of the discipline. Project participants grasped this concept but were not able to reach it during the span of the project.

Content

Dealing with new scholarship means, first of all, changes in the content of courses and attention to the methods by which content is established. Some of the content changes from these projects are no longer startling because of the accepted position these ideas have taken in some disciplines in the few years since these projects occurred. Textbooks by major publishers now incorporate scholar-

ship on women and minorities, at least in literature, history, and sociology.

However, the changes made in course content, whether obvious or surprising, indicate how great the need was to balance the curriculum to provide instruction that validates the experiences of the majority of community college students. Courses in ten disciplines were changed in the following ways:

Arts:

- examining effects of privileging of some forms as major—oil painting, symphonies, operas—forms which often require expensive media, training, and civic support, and classifying some forms as minor—work songs, blues, ceremonial music of non-Western cultures, ceramics, textiles, jewelry;
- exploring images of women and nonwhites in art, drama, film;
- determining the implications of valuing form, style, and technique over subject matter; abstraction vs. human concern;
- (re)discovering female and minority composers, painters, sculptors, photographers, patrons;
- inclusion of non-Western scales, rhythms, and forms;
- seeing connections between "values" and "progress";
- asking who are the tastemakers? whence their criteria?

Biology:

- examining the contributions of women scientists, such as Rosalind Franklin, Barbara McClintock, Martha Chase, Rachel Carson, Rosalyn Yalow, Helen Taussig, and Candace Pert as an integral part of the course rather than as an "add on";
- determining the evaluative point of view about research findings, methods, and applications:

  The aspirin/heart attack study using over 22,000 male physicians—why were women not included? Are the results applicable to females?

  Are conclusions based on small sample populations or relatively homogeneous groups, such as patients at veterans' hospitals, valid generalizations to the whole population?
- acknowledgment that science is not truly objective—that biases, personal animosities, rhetorical and metaphorical language, and contradictory views exist in science as well as in all other communities.

Business:

- added specific material about women managers;
- increased use of Labor Department statistics and other current documents about men/women/minorities salary and job categories;
- discussion of working and family issues;
- discussion of gender, race, and ethnic issues in advertising;
- discussion of comparable worth.

Composition:

- attention to textbooks, looking for positive images of all groups, multicultural perspectives;
- improved use of peer editing;
- inclusion of journals and other informal writing both in the composition class and for use in other classes;
- sharing one's own writing;
- assignments dealing with race and gender;
- two concerns about teaching argument:
  lack of emphasis in textbooks on reaching consensus;
  students' unwillingness to challenge or take a stand.

Criminal Justice:

- analysis of depiction of judges, police officers, criminals, attorneys, and victims in pictures, drawings, and cartoons;
- women as offenders and professionals;
- reclassification of rape as a violent—not sexual—crime and the impact of such reclassification on offenders, victims, and the judicial system.

History:

- seeing how one group has been accepted as universal and normative, automatically marginalizing the others;
- using race, class, and gender as core themes, rather than including them as "problems";
- questioning periodization and labels: asking how women, slaves, and workers experienced the golden era of fifth-century Greece or the stimulation of the Renaissance;
- looking at many human experiences in historical eras: for example, in the pre-Civil War South, the master and the mistress of

plantations, female and male slaves, men and women as yeoman farmers;

- examining the role of women in economic systems from the gathering/hunting societies to modern socialism, communism, and capitalism;
- increased use of primary sources and nontraditional sources, such as letters, diaries, advertisements:

  For example, a course unit on the Lowell Mill girls, using slides of photographs of the mills, a typical day's schedule, selections from the *Lowell Offering*, a magazine produced by and for the girls which both glossed over and revealed the realities of their lives.

Literature (American):

- inclusion of Native American, Hispanic American, and Asian American texts;
- more attention to slave narratives and seeing differences between female and male slaves' experiences;
- addition of Zora Neale Hurston and other women writers to a course in African American literature that was dominated by male writers.

Literature (World):

- examining the myths of Eve and Pandora as models for images/life patterns in the western world;
- providing gender analysis of the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, and the *Aeneid*;
- discovering insights into positions of women in the classical world through the dramas;
- pursuing a shift from exclusively European and North American texts to inclusion of some African and Latin American texts;
- providing organization by themes: nature, love, family life, work, war/violence, with emphasis on multiplicity of views.

Nursing:

- addition of cultural history of women as related to the development of nursing;
- considering the importance of gender in nursing;
- providing images of nurses in the media, arts, and literature;
- exploring the relationships between war and nursing;

- discussing the economic and political questions of equal pay and comparable worth;
- discovering the voice (or silence) of nurses in politics and policy.

Psychology:

- determining gender differences in mental illness;
- examining gender roles and mental disorders, such as depression, agoraphobia, eating disorders, alcoholism;
- considering the bias in scientific research—methodological bias in subject selection for psychological studies;
- exploring the implications of the use of male norms for evaluating women;
- discussing the cultural attitudes toward menstruation and menopause and the impact on women's self-esteem (contrast with attitudes toward male puberty and middle age);
- exploring the social dilemmas associated with prostitution and pornography.

Sociology:

- making race, class, gender, ethnicity more visible as tools of analysis;
- providing more critical evaluation of theories;
- comparing shopping malls that cater to different groups, noting differences in shops and services and racial assumptions about consumers;
- exploring gender stereotyping in children's stories and fairy tales;
- exploring considerations of domestic violence;
- examining novels about social problems.

Pedagogy/Active Learning

These projects encouraged faculty to establish a participatory classroom atmosphere, one in which students collaborate with one another and with the instructor to bring about their learning. The primary goal is to move from "received" to "connected" to "constructed" knowledge and "passionate knowing" (Belenky et al., 1986). Another goal is to construct courses that help students "integrate the skills of critical thinking with respect for and ability to work with others" (Shrewsbury, 1987, p. 7).

Faculty included small-group work and student presentations, which build confidence as well as increase knowledge of course content, and usually counted such activities in grading students. Faculty members developed assignments, like journals and interviews, to increase personal involvement and to show students how their experiences and their worlds are the starting points for research into larger questions.

Faculty do not abdicate their responsibility when they share classroom power through more student involvement, nor do they make their jobs easier. Instructors still must transmit knowledge that defines their discipline; they must choose books and other materials; give lectures, tests, and grades; lead discussions; and carefully plan, monitor, guide, and evaluate student participation. Sensitivity, a great deal of flexibility, good humor, and much planning are essential when adopting inclusive teaching methods, but those methods are judged by both instructors and students to be worth the efforts. Transformation projects and writing-across-the-curriculum projects share this commitment to active, engaged learning.

Pedagogy/Teaching through Writing

Naturally, English faculty gave much attention to writing assignments as they revised their courses. Composition as well as literature courses were changed, so English faculty had special opportunities to apply composition research and to see its connections with feminist pedagogy. But faculty in other disciplines used writing in redesigned courses to an extent that was surprising at first, but then, on reflection, less so. The required journals had shown clearly how informal writing can connect a learner with course material. In addition, many project faculty had participated in WAC efforts because they are the kind of faculty who are always interested in improving their teaching effectiveness.

In their revised courses, many faculty included writing in traditional modes, like research papers, case studies, summaries, essay exams, book/article/film/performance/exhibit reviews, and field trip reports. Increased time for drafting and revising was often scheduled, and more take-home assignments were given. One sociology instructor who wanted students to see writing both as a dialogue with him and as an instrument of learning stated this policy, which rewarded promptness and revision, in his course syllabus:

> All assignments turned in on time can be revised until you are satisfied with the results and your understanding of the material. Late papers will be accepted for two weeks, but they will not receive comments and cannot be revised. . . .

Faculty also used informal writing: journals, response papers, "thinking" papers, reports of small-group discussion, one-minute writings, written questions about material or for use in examinations, and computer conferencing.

Two criminal justice faculty said that they "increasingly find journals to be our most useful tool," ask for some entries to be done at home and some written in class, and count journal writing in the course grade. Some of their prompts include:

- Describe yourself and your relationship to this course, including your course goals.
- Describe the effects of race, gender, age, social class, and physical appearance on your own experiences with the criminal justice system and with crime.
- React to visual and print media coverage of crime issues (with which we are constantly bombarded). Write about the portrayal of victims, of offenders, of authority and power, of the victim-offender relationship.

These instructors said, "Almost all students have improved their writing ability, perhaps more in terms of thoughtful expression than in style and form."

An instructor in hotel/motel management used what she called a "reactive journal." She asked her students to write informally to such assignments as those listed below and remarked recently that now she can't teach without this personal writing:

- In your work in the hospitality industry, have you ever experienced racism or sexism—either as a victim or an observer? Describe what you saw and felt.
- Analyze the "climate" of the organization in which you are working in terms of the presence or absence of sexist or racist attitudes.
- Write a work autobiography telling of jobs you have had in the hospitality industry, how you acquired them, and what you learned from them.

- Analyze your managerial strengths and weaknesses. How would your management style differ from those of managers you have worked for in the hospitality industry?
- Do you think a person's management style has anything to do with his/her gender?

Two English faculty, one in composition and one in literature, had students use journals as seedbeds for formal papers. The composition instructor joined her students in the process by developing one of her own journal entries into an article that she planned to submit for publication.

Pedagogy/Textbooks

Curriculum reform requires attention to textbooks and, in these projects, analysis of the presence and treatment of women and minorities. Recently published books generally avoid overtly sexist language like the universal "he" and the misleading "man," but vestiges still remain. Nursing faculty worry about the continuing representation of nurses as "she's" and doctors as "he's." Philosophy faculty noted that the use of "man" and "men," especially in model syllogisms, can exclude women: All men are mortal. Mary is a man . . . ? Social science faculty noticed that minorities and women are too often ghetto-ized into chapters as "problems" or "questions." Art faculty observed an improvement in a widely used text: In the 1963 edition, there were no plates of works by women or minority artists; in a 1986 printing, among 1,079 plates, eighteen were by women and one was by a minority. English composition and literature anthologies have become noticeably more inclusive in the last few years, in response to new scholarship and faculty insistence on its use.

Language

The language of a course defines its subject matter and values. It is both the substance and the means of conveying substance. Obviously, such a complex issue is central to curriculum transformation but can only be touched on here in much the same way that project faculty could only be awakened to the issue in three semesters. Faculty looked for conscious and unconscious metaphors that establish attitudes: the taming of the wilderness, virgin land, settling of the West, Columbus's "discovery" of the hemisphere populated by millions of people, labels

of "progress" and "development," calling a community of female seals a "harem." All disciplines employ locutions that may not represent a concept accurately and that may, at the same time, perpetuate gender and cultural stereotypes.

The conceptual effect of common dualisms was also addressed; pairs like masculine/feminine, black/white, active/passive make it difficult to conceive of the complex and more accurate patterns of reality. Faculty discussed the implications of using common metaphors and dualisms and developed a heightened sensitivity to the power of language to stifle or stimulate reader/student response.

Conclusion

The student body will continue to grow in numbers and diversity, and the curriculum will need reform, just as it always has. For the near future, it seems important for community college faculty and students to have the opportunity to update in the areas in which this essay has focused. The special mission of the community college, which is to empower its students by moving them from passive to active learning, verifies the need for more transformation projects. Finally, in their awareness of the constructing power of language, English faculty will continue to do research, to stay current in the growing body of research in composition and literature, to try to help students and colleagues understand how writing and learning are connected, to prepare students for writing in other courses, and finally to help students become independent, critical learners, as well as thoughtful members of their own communities and of that larger but increasingly fragile community, the world.

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10 The Integration Project: A Model for Curriculum Transformation

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Curriculum Transformation and Faculty Development

Since the mid-1970s, a flood of new scholarship on gender, race, ethnicity, and class has emerged which reinterprets knowledge, the traditional disciplines, and our view of reality itself. Methodologies and canons are being transformed through the insights which the new scholarship reveals. These developments are being felt at almost all postsecondary institutions of learning, and they are particularly apt for the two-year college. More than half of all American college students are enrolled at two-year institutions, and this student population represents a great diversity of race, class, age, and ethnicity. It is, therefore, most important that two-year colleges engage in the exciting reinterpretations of human experience which the new scholarship provides. By doing so, students find themselves and their own experiences reflected in the courses they take. Too often in American education, the experiences of a small minority have been offered as the universal truth which is somehow normative for all. As Audre Lorde (1984) has observed, in the traditional American model, the norm is "defined as white, thin, male, young, heterosexual, Christian, and financially secure" (p. 116). Since many two-year college students and faculty members do not fit many of these criteria, it is most important that we transform the courses and curricula so that they are inclusive and reflect the reality of our students; to not do so is to risk an educa-

tion that excludes our students and limits, rather than expands, the opportunities their education is supposed to provide.

Bergen Community College, a twenty-two-year-old institution in the suburbs of New York City, enrolls approximately 12,000 students in a wide range of transfer and terminal degree programs. Several faculty members felt that we should transform our curriculum so that it might better address the needs of our diverse student body. The Integration Project, therefore, was designed as a comprehensive, multi-year project to increase faculty awareness and sensitivity to the issues raised by the new scholarship on gender, race, ethnicity, and class, and to transform the content and pedagogy of courses so as to create an inclusive curriculum. By "integration" we mean what Paulo Freire (1987) defines as "integration with one's context, as distinguished from adaptation, [which] is a distinctly human activity. Integration results from the capacity to make choices and transform that reality" (p. 4).

After a year's study of the particular nature of our institution, we determined that any efforts to transform the curriculum had to be preceded by faculty development. Faculty members were involved in setting the goals of the Integration Project from its inception, so as to insure both the success of the project and to explore any resistance to it. Faculty designed a program of intellectual and scholarly exploration that progressed from the theoretical to the programmatic. Several faculty members from a range of disciplines at Bergen Community College attended a statewide, two-week session in June 1987, during which various lectures, discipline seminars, team meetings, and other activities explored the new scholarship. This team provided the leadership for the project on campus. In subsequent years, the leadership team rotated in new members in order to provide both continuity and innovation.

The Integration Project has several activity components, an administrative plan, and an evaluation plan. The activities designed to foster faculty development include a lecture series, a study seminar, and a co-mentoring program. The administrative plan functions according to a feminist model of collective leadership, and the evaluation plan includes both those involved in the project and outside evaluators in formative and summative evaluation. Additional programs have included such activities as a collegewide dinner; a book display; the dedication of a newly created Center for the Study of Gender, Race, Ethnicity, and Class; a student awards luncheon honoring student scholarship related to the issues of gender, race, ethnicity, and class;

cable television programs; and a wide range of presentations, publications, and lectures delivered by team members. In addition, a community-based advisory board was created to publicize our efforts throughout the county.

The lecture series, entitled "Faculty Forum," is open to the entire college community. Each of the seven team members delivers a program on an issue raised by the new scholarship. Thereafter, that team member is identified as a resource for further information on the particular subject. We felt that such "inside experts" could provide the kind of follow-up that is often lacking when an "outside expert" delivers a speech and then disappears. The topics of the Faculty Forum series have ranged over a broad spectrum of academic disciplines. They have included the meanings of class, women's history, gender stereotyping in sports, revising the literary canon, feminist theory, African American poetry, Native American cultures, feminist philosophy and religion, and ethnic images in toys and games. The formats have included lectures, discussions, demonstrations, slide presentations, and a play.

While the lecture series addresses a large audience, the study seminars are geared toward a more narrow participation. Limited to twenty faculty, the seminar members meet monthly throughout the academic year to read and discuss articles and issues about the new scholarship. Membership in the seminar is entirely voluntary, and faculty members receive no remuneration or released time for their participation. The Integration Project offers each member a selection of books and materials at the conclusion of each year's work. Seminar members represent a wide cross section of disciplines such as English, philosophy, mathematics, sociology, history, science, speech, and foreign languages. Initially, the project directors selected and distributed the articles and served as discussion facilitators. During the subsequent years, the members of the seminar began to "own" the process, such that they now suggest readings, provide articles, and facilitate the discussions themselves. The topics for discussion include the intersection of women's studies and African American studies, the philosophies of science, ethnicity, language as it relates to power, language as a tool of oppression, theories of class, heterosexism, racism, feminist inclusionary theory, re-visioned religion, class as a socioeconomic determinant of perceptions, pedagogy as a tool of oppression, inclusive pedagogy, and curricular transformation.

The third major activity of the Integration Project, co-mentoring, addresses the smallest group of faculty members, the Integration Project Team. The team consists of three co-directors and four team

members. The co-directors, whose disciplines include English, women's studies, French, and mathematics, serve as mentors to the other team members, whose disciplines include history, sociology, health, and Spanish. The wide range of disciplines adds the necessary broad perspectives to the discussion of gender, race, ethnicity, and class, and provides a balanced view in the selection of materials for group discussion. Co-mentoring activities include primarily discussion among team members of curricular and pedagogical questions, review of Faculty Forum presentations, and collaborative peer review of teaching.

The impact of the activities of the Integration Project on campus is measured by the number of people joining in the various activities and by the increased introduction of the issues into the classroom. During the first years of the Faculty Forum series, approximately forty people attended each of the seven presentations, with a constant cohort of about twenty. During subsequent years, this number rose to about sixty, with a constant cohort of about twenty. During the first year of the project, there were twenty-two seminar participants in one seminar; during the second year, an additional seminar group formed with sixteen members, while the first group continued with twenty-two members. The co-mentoring activities spread as the team rotated each year, thereby increasing the number of resource persons at the college from seven to eleven to fifteen.

The administrative plan for the Integration Project is based on a model of collective leadership, carried out by the individuals whose particular expertise is deemed to be most appropriate to the task. The co-directors meet biweekly to discuss the short-term and long-range needs of the project, and the entire team meets periodically. The co-directors report to the Community Advisory Board on a biannual basis, and to the vice president for Academic Affairs. The co-directors are responsible for all disbursements of funds and all reporting to various granting agencies. They are responsible for designing, collecting, and interpreting evaluative tools. The co-directors have received limited released time from teaching, funded by grants and institutional matches.

Evaluation is an ongoing process that uses a multiplicity of informal and formal tools. Questionnaires are used to study attitudinal changes, expectations sheets and logs are kept by seminar participants, interviews are conducted with seminar members, and proxy markers are kept. The Integration Project engaged Betty Schmitz, a nationally recognized expert in curriculum transformation projects, for the outside evaluation during the first year of the project. In her written report to

the State of New Jersey, Schmitz (1989) indicated that the Integration Project "had accomplished as much as any in the nation, and gone well beyond the majority, in laying the groundwork for substantial impact on the curriculum. Their program for faculty development can readily serve as a model for peer institutions."

The Integration Project at Bergen Community College finished its first phase of faculty development in 1991. We have learned that two-year college faculty members are anxious to become involved in a meaningful program of faculty development if it is faculty oriented and faculty directed, with a strong intellectual component that can challenge and excite them. Faculty development continues at the college, and the Integration Project has entered into the next phase of curricular transformation. Many courses have undergone tremendous revision as a result of the Integration Project. A discussion of developmental English and English Composition I will serve as examples of how the transformation of faculty members, through their participation in a project such as ours, results in the transformation of their courses.

Transformation of Developmental English

Transformation of developmental English could not happen by merely changing a few readings and adding a few topics. We learned that we had to change methods, content, and our whole way of thinking about teaching and learning. Developmental skills courses on our campus consist of five teaching hours per week of reading and writing, taught by the same teacher. Faculty have selected a reader of short, simple passages and a workbook-style writing text. Participation in the Integration Project helped faculty to rethink pedagogical choices. We read Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) in our seminar; it appeared to us that traditional developmental English curricula implied "banking" pedagogy. We wanted to write a curriculum that started with the students, that encouraged students to develop a critical consciousness, and that acknowledged the diversity they brought to our classroom.

We were influenced, also, by the work of David Bartholomae and Anthony Petrosky in *Facts, Artifacts, and Counterfacts* (1986). We wanted to write a curriculum that reflected Bartholomae and Petrosky's belief that there is

> no reason to prohibit students from doing serious work because they [can] not do it correctly . . . There is no good reason to take students who [are] not fluent readers and writers and consign them to trivial or mechanical work in the belief that it [will]

> somehow prepare them for a college education. It would make sense, rather, to enroll these students in an exemplary course—a small seminar where students [meet] to read, write, and talk about a single problem or subject—and to provide the additional time and support they [need] to work on reading and writing that characterize college study. (preface [ii])

Given these theoretical influences, we designed a seminar-style course about a single theme that engages students in reading, writing, and discussion of whole works and provided the time and support needed to do work that is characteristic of college study.

As Bartholomae and Petrosky suggested, we wanted our students to explore a single theme for their work during the semester. We chose the theme of "learning and education" because we thought it was something about which students knew a lot. They have been through twelve years of educational experiences upon which they could draw in their reading and writing. In addition, many students who come to remedial classes on our campus have had negative educational experiences. At the same time, they are embarking on a new venture in college, and it seems important for them to think about their past experiences as they plan for future ones. Once again, we were influenced by Freire, who suggested that teachers start with the world of their students, start with what their students know. Given the diverse population at our college, we thought that "education and learning" was one thing our students all had in common. And it has proven, in practice, to have been a very good choice.

Like Bartholomae and Petrosky, we believed it was important for students to read whole books and to write about their reading. We also believed it was important to consider issues of race, gender, ethnicity, and class in looking for texts. We selected four texts for our students: *Black Boy* (Richard Wright), *Bread Givers* (Anzia Yesierska), *Hunger of Memory* (Richard Rodriguez), and *Lives on the Boundary* (Mike Rose). Each of these books involves a person who fights against incredible odds to pursue and acquire an education. Each book focuses on one or more of the issues of gender, race, ethnicity, or class as it intersects with the overall main issue of education and learning.

We have tried other books which were also selected in the same manner: *The Color Purple* (Alice Walker), *Among School Children* (Tracy Kidder) and *How Children Fail* (John Holt). We have learned that various works can be interchanged in this curriculum model, and we are interested in exploring other themes as well.

We structured the course like a seminar. Experience has taught us that all students benefit from ritual and knowing what to expect, so each week has a typical agenda. First, students read a portion of the

assigned text. Usually they read about sixty to a hundred pages per week. Second, students write in their journals about their reading. (Journals will be explained in greater detail, later.) Third, students work in small groups, discussing the overall plot and main ideas they found while reading. At this time they raise questions for discussion. Class discussion follows, focused on themes and ideas in the text and questions students discovered in their small groups. After discussion, students write an essay on their reading. Each of these writing assignments focuses on an idea related to our theme of education and learning. Finally, we finish our weekly sequence with a peer-review session about the essay written that week. Then, the cycle begins again the following week.

Each week students write a journal entry in response to their reading. Briefly, we ask students to use the double-entry format described in the work of Ann Berthoff (1982). This format encourages students to write what they found interesting or important on one side of the page and to explain the connections and reasons for that importance on the other side. Many students adapt this format to suit their own reading styles, and we encourage that. Some students use their journals to ask questions about the reading and to propose or guess answers. Others do a lot of writing about past experience as they make connections to their reading. Yet others analyze the passages they quote in their journals. We are not too particular about the style that their journals take; we are interested in the dialogical thinking that these journals evoke (i.e., in students responding to their reading before they come to class and in students marking their texts). These journals are not graded for grammar or mechanics or even coherence, since they are a place to work out thoughts. They are graded, in the end, for the energy and effort that the students put into them.

Discussion is a very significant part of this course, and in order to assist students with that process, we use what we call a "work sheet" for each reading assignment. These work sheets are closely modeled on the work sheets in Bartholomae and Petrosky's curriculum. Each work sheet contains four questions—two of which always ask students to recall main events and characters in the novel. The third question varies, depending on the issues we think might be important for students to consider in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, class, or the overall issue of education. The final question usually asks students to prioritize events or circumstances that are more important than others. We are most interested in the thinking students have to do to justify why one thing is more important than another. This is the kind of thinking that they are asked to do for college assignments.

After the students fill out the work sheets in small groups, each group reports during full-class discussion. We negotiate and clarify each group's reasoning and try to come to some sort of consensus about significant parts of the reading. This leads to a writing assignment. What is important about this discussion process is that it starts with what the students have learned from their reading, and it urges them to find reasons for their opinions. It keeps students actively searching through their texts to justify their opinions. These students are not finding "the main idea" in an isolated paragraph; they are dealing with a large text and making meaning out of it, as most readers do. The authority is shifted from the text to the reader. This change in outlook was a direct result of work done in the Integration Project.

Writing assignments ask students to move from an example of personal experience to a generalization about that experience. Our goal is to assist students in learning to write academic discourse, which we see as characterized by using examples and drawing generalizations from those examples. Each writing assignment guides students to do this. In addition, each assignment is kept in a folder and used as material in generating a final project. In a sense, students are drafting parts of their final projects with each writing assignment that they do. At the same time, each assignment requires students to pay attention to their writing processes, and some class time is spent discussing how the students wrote their essays.

After the students finish their assignments, we duplicate a few to use in a peer-review session. Students discuss their own work, much like they discuss the texts of professional writers; they point out what they found interesting and significant in the work of their peers. This phase of the writing reflects what academic work is all about—the exchange of ideas of published work and work-in-progress. Once again, the notion that the work of remedial students would be considered in the same way as a professional writer was influenced by the reading we did as part of the Integration Project.

The final project of the course is a six-page paper about a student's "theory of education." Students assemble relevant passages from their essays and journals over the course of the semester and organize them into a paper which presents their theories about how education should work. Students learn how to cite and document sources from the texts we read in class, as well as how to consult other sources. They use their own experience and that of their peers as sources, too. For most, it is the first lengthy writing they have done without substantial paraphrasing from outside sources. Every student who finished the course in the fall 1990 semester did this paper, and only two students out of

120 turned in a "canned" paper. The students' work was original, interesting, and clearly showed that they struggled to express their thoughts. We were extremely pleased with these results.

Our position about editing and error was also influenced by our participation in the Integration Project. "Banking" teachers assume students don't know the rules for English, so they teach them the rules, and then they give the students exercises to correct their deficiencies. We think students have reasons for the mistakes that they make in their writing, so we discuss their errors only in the context of their writing and in individual conferences. Our students are caught in the conflict between the language they speak at home or on the streets and the language they are expected to use in college. Their work in our course is an attempt at using a new language—academic discourse (see Rose, 1989, p. 142). As such, we see the errors they use in attempting this new language as a sign of learning. It might take much longer than the three months we spend with them to learn this new language, and we expect that they will make errors, especially as they write about increasingly more difficult and abstract topics in our course.

Our students do have to pass a departmental exit test—a holistically scored essay, written in one hour. We did not find, however, that our failure to teach grammar formally, or our commitment to addressing it in editing student work, kept our students behind others who exited into English Composition I. An equal or a slightly higher percentage of our students exited into English Composition I than when we used the traditional approach of reader and workbook in previous semesters.

In making this curriculum transformation, we did not "add race and stir" or "add women and stir." Instead, we did not assume that our students were deficient. In addition, we intentionally focused on issues of gender, race, ethnicity, and class, and we attempted to share authority on the subject with our students. Ultimately, we believe that we could not have made this transformation without the personal growth that occurred in the faculty development portion of this project.

Transformation in English Composition I

At Bergen Community College, English Composition I is the only course required of every student in all programs. The Integration Project team felt that transformation of this course would have the greatest initial impact at the college. By focusing the readings,

writings, and discussions on the issues of gender, race, ethnicity, and class, a unity was created which is often lacking in traditional composition courses. The transformed course is the product of several years of planning, the conducting of pilot sections, and ongoing evaluation.

We chose *Rereading America* (Columbo, Cullen, & Lisle, 1989) as our text. All of its readings deal with issues raised by the new scholarship, and the assignments which grow out of them provide students with opportunities to confront these issues and to apply them to their own lives. For example, several of the first readings focus attention on various forms of prejudice. After reading and discussing the selections in class, students write about an incident in their own lives when they were victims of prejudice. At first, many are puzzled—they do not see themselves as victims of prejudice because they do not fall into groups that they have come to identify as traditionally victimized, such as racial or ethnic minorities. But upon reflection, they begin to understand prejudice as being any negatively discriminatory act from which they've suffered. They write about age discrimination, physical handicaps, and more obvious forms of racial and sexist bias. Such an assignment is a way of validating their own experiences while connecting them to the experiences of others. Students begin to feel engaged more personally in the material of the readings. This is not unlike the process that faculty involved in the Integration Project underwent in the study seminar.

The research paper required in English Composition I, which considers some aspect of racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, or ethnocentrism, is the culmination of the semester's work and builds upon the expertise that students have developed from their readings, discussions, and writings about these same issues over the course of the entire semester. The idea of research is expanded beyond the traditional searching in source material, which is all too often secondary text. For example, one student interviewed and wrote an oral history of a convicted drug abuser to explore issues of classism and racism in his experience. Another student explored the effects of her children's bilingualism on their success in American schools; to do this research, this student looked at artifacts of her children's early schoolwork, interviewed teachers in their school, and read about the controversy over bilingualism.

In addition, the research paper is grounded in ideas found in Ken Macrorie's *I-Search Paper* (1988): "Contrary to most school research papers, the I-Search comes out of a student's life and answers a need in it. The writer testifies to the subjective-objective character of the

project. The paper is alive, not borrowed inert" (*preface* [v]). Students are encouraged to use the research process to search out answers to a topic that is an authentic question involving issues of gender, race, ethnicity, and class as they are related to the students' own experiences. Experience in the study seminars of the Integration Project taught faculty that such issues are particularly conducive to the I-Search paper since they involve personal perspectives and the transformation of those perspectives through personal and intellectual exploration.

Changing content implies changing pedagogy; therefore, the class is conducted on principles of collaboration with the design of empowering students by encouraging an appreciation of their own experience and of the diversity found in the culture of the classroom. The traditional procedure, which asks students to submit a final product to an instructor for evaluation, with all the prewriting and composing done privately, ignores the stages of the writing process and deprives students of ongoing peer and self-evaluation. In a collaborative setting, the stages of the writing process are given priority over the finished product. The class discusses and defines the assignments. This conversation is the beginning of prewriting in which students are encouraged to share their ideas and to clarify them through collective critique. Students then work in groups to formulate their ideas more clearly, to create drafts, and to benefit from ongoing peer evaluation. The instructor serves as a resource to the groups and provides suggestions for revision throughout the process, rather than as an editor and evaluator. When error is treated as part of the learning process, rather than as a criterion for evaluating finished products, it can be a positive step toward achieving the goals of good writing.

Both revisions of developmental English and English Composition I courses represent changes that occurred as a result of the transformations that happened in individual faculty members. It is our experience that curriculum transformation cannot occur as a result of a mandate from administration—the Integration Project is representative of the idea that faculty members' increased awareness of gender, race, ethnicity, and class will increase their sensitivity to these issues and provide the foundation for curricular transformation. We believe that just as the new scholarship reflects a new vision of authority, this model for curriculum transformation reflects that vision as well—this vision of authority affects the content and pedagogy of our transformed courses as well as the process we used to transform them.

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11 If at First You Don't Succeed: Effective Strategies for Teaching Composition in the Two-Year College

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In the last twenty years, writing instructors have experienced an explosion of changes in their subject matter and in their students. Although teaching writing has always been challenging, in the last two decades writing teachers have been blown by the philosophical winds of Freire, Bakhtin, and Derrida, bombarded with theories of the writing process from cognition to collaboration, and assailed as unnecessary sources of "Engfish" or as architects of arcane "heuristics." At the same time, we are teaching a more varied student population: more returning adult students; more speakers of English as a second language; more first-generation college students who may not understand college methods and standards; more students who depend on mass media instead of books for their information and whose knowledge of written sentence structure, spelling, vocabulary, and effective organization of ideas is not the same as the students we taught twenty years ago. Added to these changes are, of course, the factors that affect all of American society: racism, sexism, poverty, violence, AIDS, and drugs. As instructors at the center of this explosion of change, we probably feel fortunate if we have emerged with our clothes on, singed a bit about the edges, but able to carry out our duties as writing teachers. In fact, even with our heavy teaching loads, many of us probably love the moment when we can close the doors to our classrooms on all the confusion, both intellectual and social, and do what we know and love—teach writing.

Change, however, brings new opportunities as well as challenges. Through the explosion of changes in composition has come research that provides opportunities for us to meet the challenges of teaching writing in the 1990s and beyond. Never before has writing been as exhaustively investigated as researchers are doing now, and those investigations are yielding practical suggestions for alternative techniques. My purpose in this essay is to examine several practical appli-

cations of some areas of current theory to provide alternatives for writing teachers who face the challenges of composition classrooms today. Particularly, I will look at some problems faced by many two-year college writing teachers and suggest some current approaches that are most promising and some areas where additional research is most needed.

Re-Examining Basic Assumptions

Extensive research by reading specialists, cognitive psychologists, linguists, and sociologists, as well as by writing instructors, has given us a heightened sense of the complexity of reading, writing, and learning and has, in turn, affected changes in our classroom practices. For example, Mina Shaughnessy's analysis of error patterns in papers written by developmental English students changed the way I looked at student errors in papers and the way I taught standard written English. Her study *Errors and Expectations* (1977) began, for me, an eagerness to examine what I had assumed to be true in light of actual research on student writing. Similarly, Frank Smith (1971) elucidated the connections between language, reading, and learning, and Janet Emig and Anne Berthoff have revealed, in several articles, connections between writing and learning. Roger Shuy (1965) has helped us to understand the connections between speech, reading, and writing, particularly as they affect speakers of different dialects.

Recent studies have continued to examine assumptions about the writing process and about how students approach writing assignments. For example, much has been written about the difficulty students have generalizing or writing about abstract ideas. Certainly, classroom teachers see evidence of this difficulty in their students' performance. However, searching for reasons for the difficulty has led to many differing theories from a variety of fields, ranging from educational psychology to philosophy. Hypotheses include differences in students' cognitive styles, problems with right brain/left brain dominance, or failure to reach what Piaget terms "formal operational thinking." In his metanalysis of such theories, Mike Rose (1988) shows that applying studies conducted on diverse populations for diverse purposes to college students in writing classes may be unwarranted. He warns,

> Once we undertake an investigation in cognition we must be careful to discuss our findings in terms of the kinds of writing we investigate. Generalizing to other tasks, and particularly to broad

> cognitive processes, is not warranted without evidence from those other domains. (p. 296)

One particularly convincing finding was that college students who were deemed cognitively deficient improved significantly with instruction in the task at hand, leading Rose to believe that students are not inherently deficient in thinking skills but instead have just never been taught how to accomplish certain tasks. Ann Berthoff (1984) agrees, arguing that

> If college students find generalizing difficult, it's because nobody has ever taught them how to go about it, and abstraction which proceeds by means of generalizing-concept formation, as it is often called, must be deliberately learned and should therefore be deliberately taught. But few methods for doing so have been developed, and those that have are . . . of the type Freire calls the banking model: the teacher deposits valuable information. . . . Assigning topics—the essential strategy of the pedagogy of exhortation—is no substitute for instruction. Our job is to devise sequences of assignments which encourage conscientization, the discovery of the mind in action. (pp. 753–755)

The kind of instruction Berthoff advocates is supported by the continuing research of George Hillocks, Jr., whose speech in 1991 to the Center for the Study of Writing can be summarized as follows: In evaluating several studies, students gained the most by instruction focusing on inquiry procedures, such as observing and generalizing from observations, supporting generalizations with specifics, and applying general criteria in order to make judgments.

What Rose, Berthoff, Hillocks, and others seem to be urging is for us not to throw up our collective hands at the problems our students are having and ascribe their difficulties to their mental capacities. Rather, we should examine carefully how we are teaching them, acknowledging perhaps that they have not received much instruction in inquiry, problem solving, and writing about abstractions. Then we should construct assignments to teach students how to go through these processes. For two examples of such sequenced assignments see Elaine O. Lees's (1983) article on a sequence appropriate for adult basic writers and my discussion (1991) of a sequence that begins with observing and journal writing and moves to a narration of an incident or summary of information, followed by a generalization supported with data, and ending with a speculative paper that predicts results. Developing other such sequences and other instructional exercises for teaching inquiry is a promising area of research for classroom composition instructors.

The point several researchers make is that students need instruction in writing processes. Instructors should not assume that students know how to write or have practiced writing sufficiently to apply their knowledge to each new writing situation. The sections that follow look at various writing tasks in some detail.

Strategies for Generating Ideas

One idea to emerge from recent composition study which has merit is that writing moves through certain stages but is recursive. That is, while planning or inventing or prewriting is important for a writer to do, the writer does not necessarily move from planning to composing to revising in lockstep order. Instead, many writers plan some, write some, revise some, plan some more, and so forth. It's important for students to know that writing is "messy," since it is often presented so neatly in textbooks. Introducing some strategies to help students invent may give them a better idea of how to start than the mere exhortation to "plan." Furthermore, the outline, a time-honored planning tool, may be too far along in the process to help students who are having problems getting started. Outlines organize ideas already in one's mind; generating those initial ideas is the goal of other strategies.

Clustering, a strategy elaborated on by Gabrielle Rico (1983), is a brainstorming technique that uses word associations drawn as clusters, with lines connecting related ideas. Students can then use the ideas that the cluster diagram produces as a writing prompt to express the relationships of the ideas. Joanna Ambron (1991), teaching biology in culturally diverse Queensborough Community College, applies clustering to enable her students, many of whom are ESL or basic skills students, to understand and write about the concepts in her course. Following a lecture (or, alternatively, following a reading assignment), students are invited to suggest a dominant term or concept. That idea is put on the board inside a central circle. Then associations with that word are suggested and lines are drawn to indicate relationships among the words. After all clusters are exhausted, students then write about the concepts derived from the diagram for about ten minutes. Students are able to focus their attention on the writing because the clusters that provide the prompts are on the board. Ambron's evaluation of the results is that clustering fosters better recall of scientific concepts and better writing than does journal writing. Applying Ambron's ideas in writing-across-the-curriculum programs or as a pre-

writing strategy for students using information from essays or other readings could be very effective.

Many researchers have looked at collaborative planning as a powerful generating strategy. George Hillocks's metanalysis of studies of effective techniques in teaching writing (1986) concludes that working in pairs or small groups prior to writing several different kinds of essays (narrative, expository, including extended definition, and argumentative) produced significantly better papers than those of control groups working alone. Burnett (1990) indicates specific advantages: "Collaborative planning encourages students to become more skillful planners; they become problem solvers who consciously explore various rhetorical elements, such as purpose, audience, organization, and design" (pp. 9–10). It is this conscious analysis that is so powerful for students who aren't used to planning. To discuss one's ideas with peers is to give voice (words) to inchoate ideas that float freely in the mind. All of us have probably had the experience in student conferences with a student who professed to have no idea of what to write for an assignment and yet, in a few minutes of discussion, suddenly says, "Oh, that's it. Now I know what to say." Peer collaboration, as an alternative or supplement to conferences, is less time-consuming for the instructor, involves more students at one time, and empowers students to help each other without reliance on the instructor. More strategies for using collaboration in other stages of the writing process will be discussed later in this chapter.

How do we know if students are having rouble with invention? Frequently, according to Gary A. Olson (1985), we don't. We notice problems in a finished piece of writing but aren't really sure where to intervene to help the student. Olson says that using a diagnostic model to look at a piece of writing may help us determine the students who have trouble at this early phase of the writing process. The first model he borrows from Lee Odell (1977, p. 119); the second is his own.

Model I

Does the writing have at least one of the following features?

1. Changes in focus (looking at different details or facets of a topic);
2. Contrasts (distinguishing between persons, places, things, qualities, or events);
3. Classifications (indicating how items fit in a larger context);
4. Information about things changing;
5. Description of the physical context;
6. Sequencing of events by time or logic, such as cause/effect. (Olson, 1985, pp. 196–197)

Model II

Does the writer use in almost every sentence one of the following:

1. a relevant fact;
2. a relevant assertion;
3. a relevant detail;
4. a relevant opinion;
5. a relevant comparison or contrast. (p. 198)

Papers deficient in these features probably result from lack of effective invention strategies, and students may be given extra help in that area of the writing process.

These strategies along with many others, such as journal writing, question asking, listing, and freewriting, help to conquer the students' fear of the blank page. As Mike Rose (1980; 1984) suggests, writer's block can result from dysfunctional rules for composing and a lack of knowledge of useful generating strategies. For composition instructors interested in conducting research, invention is a fruitful area, in particular for assessing what techniques work best for certain groups of students or with certain types of writing. Another area needing further study is the application of invention strategies throughout the writing process, rather than merely as prewriting tools.

What Do I Do Now? Strategies for Composing

Several studies suggest ways instructors can help their students think through ideas and begin to write. Again, one promising strategy is collaboration. At Texas Christian University, Angela O'Donnell and five colleagues (1985) found that students working in pairs improved the "communicative quality" of writing a set of instructions over those working alone, and even more significantly, that those students who had worked together subsequently did better alone than did those who had never had the collaborative experience. This finding should encourage those instructors who would like to arrange some collaborative activities but feel that collaboration is too time-consuming for use in every assignment.

Another strategy asks us to pay attention to what we, as writing teachers, ask students to do. John R. Hayes (1991) found that

> Groups *do* differ in the ways they define important writing tasks. Thus, some of the differences in performance which we might attribute to differences in skill may, in fact, be due to differences in task definition. Second, in some cases at least, task definitions are malleable. That is, some writing performances can be im-

> proved simply by making clear to the writer what it is that we want them to do. (p. 3)

Instructors wanting to check task definition could ask students to repeat instructions for an assignment to see if they understood it the way the instructor intended it. And writing down assignment instructions may be better than delivering them orally. Also, if a writing center helps students, written instructions for an assignment may help the writing tutor to aid the student in defining the task.

We have all had experience with the effects of procrastination on student writing performance. "Midnight madness" may insure that a paper gets in on time but does little to make it a good paper. No doubt we have all tried strategies to get students working on a paper ahead of the due date. Nelson and Hayes (1988) conducted an experiment to determine what effect the social context of an assignment had on performance. Students were assigned as follows:

1. Control—students assigned a topic and due date.
2. Reference—students given list of references.
3. Drafts—students required to submit drafts two weeks before due date.
4. Talks—students required to give in-class talks one to two weeks prior to due date. (p. 14)

Probably to no one's surprise who knows the power of peer pressure or the power of speech rehearsal on performance, the "talks" group performed "significantly better" than the control or reference groups. Talks groups were more concerned about audience. Drafts groups did more revision, and talks and drafts groups spent more time working on their papers.

Another plan for using the power of peers in a community college setting comes from Anthony Walsh (1990), who suggests dividing a class into "teams" with the instructor as "coach" and with the "goal" of writing a researched paper entirely during several class periods. While the coaching metaphor may not appeal to all instructors, there may be advantages to working through a researched assignment in class to model the process.

A strategy that straddles composing and revising comes from Phillip Gardner (1991), who suggests students compose an essay without an introduction since it may be difficult for them to know how to introduce a topic that they have not yet put into words. Once this first draft is completed, the student can then ask several questions of herself: "What do I really think about this subject? What is it that most people don't realize about this subject? What is the truth about this

subject as I see it?" The resulting answers will lead students into their introduction and provide a tool for revising the draft. If no answers are forthcoming, a change of topic might be in order.

These and other composing strategies lead to at least some drafting of ideas. The next task, revising, has always been difficult to teach because, as we know and Nancy Sommers (1980) confirms, many students resist changing anything except mechanics once they have a draft of a paper. Part of that resistance stems from the tediousness of rewriting (made easier now by the increasingly wide use of computers for word processing), but another part results from students' inability to resee their papers, to develop a reader's perspective, as the next section is entitled. However, all writers know how important revising is and how it occurs at all stages of the writing process. As Erika Lindemann (1987) describes it, writers "redefine their purpose and audience, reassess the message, reshape the discourse, and realign their meaning with linguistic forms" (p. 176). In the cyclical nature of writing processes, the techniques of generating ideas and composing are brought to bear even after some ideas are drafted. The next section looks at some practical ways to make revising effective for students.

Developing a Reader's Perspective

The basic difficulty of teaching revising seems to be getting students to look at their work from a reader's perspective. As Kristie Fleckenstein (1992) expresses it, using Linda Flower's dichotomy between writer and reader, "Helping students create coherent texts is one of the most difficult jobs that composition teachers have. Part of that difficulty lies in the fact that coherence is as much a reader-based phenomenon as it is a writer-based creation" (p. 81). Fleckenstein explains that a reader draws cues from the writer's prose to follow what the writer is saying, and that inexpert writers have difficulty putting themselves in the reader's shoes to see that they may not be giving the reader enough cues: "Writers need to perceive the desires or expectations their texts arouse in their projected readers and then check to see if those desires are satisfied. Such a difficult role reversal is not easy to achieve . . . " (p. 82).

Building on others' practices of using predictive exercises, Fleckenstein suggests two strategies for helping students to achieve that role reversal: First, students are given a passage to read that does not have a topic sentence or other cues to the point the writer is making. The teacher then asks the students to point out the places they don't under-

stand, explaining that without a context, readers have no way of developing expectations of what a passage is about or no way to test whether the expectations they do have are, in fact, reasonable. Fleckenstein uses the following passage:

> Sally first tried setting loose a team of gophers. The plan backfired when a dog chased them away. She then entertained a group of teenagers and was delighted when they brought their motorcycles. Unfortunately, she failed to find a Peeping Tom listed in the Yellow Pages. Furthermore, her stereo was not loud enough. The crab grass might have worked, but she didn't have a fan that was sufficiently powerful. The obscene phone calls gave her hope until the number was changed. She thought about calling a door-to-door salesman but decided to hang up a clothesline instead. It was the installation of blinking neon lights across the street that did the trick. She eventually framed the ad from the classified section. (p. 82)

The sentence that provides the cues is "Sally disliked her neighbors and wanted them to leave the area" (p. 83). Although some sentences in the above passage could still be revised, the sentence setting up the expectations gives readers a way to link Sally's actions (all are ways to irritate a homeowner—gophers, crab grass, loud music and other noise, harassment, ugly lawn displays, culminating in the ad advertising their house for sale, or so we could conclude).

A second predictive strategy Fleckenstein advocates is a way to get students to act as peer editors for each other. Using an overhead projector, an instructor projects an incoherent paragraph one sentence at a time (arranging it so each sentence has blank space below it, and covering as she goes). For each sentence, she asks students to write

> a. what they think the idea of the sentence is;
> b. what they think will come next;
> c. what they think this essay is about. (p. 83)

After doing this for each sentence, students should make suggestions for revising the paper. She repeats this exercise in small groups with another prepared paragraph. Then students prepare a work-in-progress paragraph with space after each sentence for their peer editors to respond to (p. 84). Finally, Fleckenstein suggests that analyzing professional writers' texts for such coherence cues is profitable for students (p. 87). Other strategies similar to these include designating the more able students in a class to discuss out loud a sample essay, making suggestions for revision, as the class listens and follows along. When revision ideas come from peer readers who say "I can't under-

stand that," student writers are more apt to respond than if the same advice is given by an instructor.

What emerges from many discussions of revision is the need for students to become better readers in order to become better writers. Many scholars are now recommending that attention to reading be included in the curriculum of the writing class. What follows are some specific suggestions for blending the two emphases.

The Place of Reading in the Writing Class

While reading nonfiction essays in composition classes either as models for student writing or as springboards for ideas has been a common practice, the place of reading and what kinds of reading to use have been the subjects of some controversy. At the 1992 Conference on College Composition and Communication in Cincinnati, Gary Tate and Erika Lindemann debated the issue, with Tate arguing for inclusion of all kinds of texts, including literature, journals, nonfiction essays, and student writing, and Lindemann maintaining that only student writing texts were appropriate for study in composition classes. Each side of the debate presented convincing arguments based on their perspective of what the curriculum of a composition course ought to include. This issue must be decided by each department or each instructor, but if reading texts is a part of a writing course, the following studies may contribute to a better understanding of students' needs.

Since students frequently have to draw upon what they read in order to write an essay, it may follow that if they have difficulties understanding what they read, they will likely have difficulties writing about what they read. Glynda Hull and Mike Rose (1989) report on some specific skills many students may lack:

> As for reading skills, we know from various comprehension studies that poor college-age readers tend more to focus on details in the material they're reading and less on the gist—that is, they have trouble knowing what's important (Vipond, 1980). They have difficulty comprehending information that is not explicitly stated, difficulty in drawing inferences, and difficulty understanding literary devices such as metaphor and irony (Marshall and Glock, 1978–79). And they are less able to evaluate their understanding of expository prose—they have difficulty monitoring what they know and don't know (Baker, 1985). (pp. 1–2)

Activities that would help students improve the above skills would likely help them find the important points to include in their essays

and help them read their own essays with a reader's eye. Several people have suggested strategies for accomplishing these tasks.

Bruce Petersen (1982) argues that writing and reading are related processes and cites several scholars' assertions that both begin with similar functions: "All argue that we process experience through personal associations [Britton], prior cognitive schemes [Flower], previous emotional responses [Bleich], and private images or memories [Rosenblatt]. When we sit down to compose or read something, we begin our organization and discovery of meaning through this matrix" (p. 461).

Petersen sees this relationship as a basis for a unified course in literature and composition with reader-response writing done as freewriting at the beginning. Students work on their freewriting responses in groups to select responses to develop into papers. They then write a first draft, peer edit, and write a final draft response which is shared with the class and discussed. Since many different responses often result, students are "introduced naturally to the limitations of ego-centered or self-confirming thought" (p. 464). Petersen begins with description and as the course progresses, continues with exposition, argument, and research. Each assignment begins with response writing, which then serves as a starting point for a generalization or thesis to emerge and be developed.

Daniel Sheridan (1991) suggests a strategy that could be part of a course and would focus on some of the reading skills students need. Sheridan suggests that teachers model reading—just as Erika Lindemann (1987) and others have suggested that teachers model the writing process before their students—that is, that instructors and students could read a text together that neither teacher nor students have read before and puzzle out the meanings together. Oral discussions and subsequent writing assignments could begin to interpret the reading. In addition, teachers could ask students to write papers of the "write a new ending" task, to imagine new characters, new relationships, or epilogues to get them to explore their responses to the work. A study by Bereiter and Scardamalia (1984) concluded that "writing in conjunction with reading a single text proved to be a powerful vehicle for learning, even more powerful than direct instruction."

Finally, reading about other cultures and about the ways writers explain their experiences in English adds a dimension of cultural diversity to the composition class. Feroza Jussawalla recommends the writers R.K. Narayan, Raja Rao, and Chinua Achébe among others. If the class represents many cultures, a writing assignment to discuss the way English is used in the student's home or neighborhood, to make

it understandable to someone of a different background, might serve several worthwhile purposes.

Where Do We Go from Here?

Research in writing is now well established and beginning to make a real difference in the way instructors approach the writing process, sequence their assignments, and integrate critical thinking and reading into their course content.

There is still, however, much to be discovered. Those teaching writing in two-year colleges can make significant contributions to the profession by testing on their very diverse students some of the strategies advocated by researchers and by reporting the results of their testing in professional journals. Many ideas proposed have emerged from research universities where the student population may be more homogeneous than in the typical community or two-year college. Two-year college composition teachers work in ideal settings to test ideas on a wider population and to devise new approaches that more effectively meet their students needs. Therefore, the two-year college teacher has an opportunity to further writing research and contribute to knowledge in the discipline, turning teaching challenges into research opportunities. Two-year college teachers should seek to answer these and many other questions: How well does a particular strategy work with adult students? What kind of approaches do students whose first language is not English require? Are some prewriting strategies more useful to one type of student than another? How can the relationship between reading and writing be exploited to enhance both activities? The answers may help all of us to become more successful writing teachers.

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12 A Quarter Century and Beyond: My Story of Teaching Technical Communication

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"We have arranged an excellent market presentation for your book. A senior writer from a well-known Eastern university will look over your manuscript in technical writing and will write an introduction. He will not change your book in any way. . . . He will simply endorse it. . . . We will compensate him. . . . No charges to you. . . . We assure you, you will be satisfied. . . . "

The year is 1969. The voice on the telephone is that of the English editor at the publishing company we had signed with.

A few days later, the same voice.

"We have the design for the title page. . . . We will use your initials and your last names. . . . "

And at the final minute, another call.

"We think the title page for your book with your names has a nice clean look to it. Not cluttered with any other information, such as your college. . . . We were confident that you would agree with this editorial choice. . . . The title page is being printed. . . . "

Thus began the sobering education of two women teachers of technical writing at a two-year college in 1969. Those two women were Ann Laster, my co-author and office mate, and me. We had stumbled into writing a book on technical writing almost by default. We desperately needed a textbook for our technical English classes which were growing every semester.

The relating of how this book came to be reflects much of two larger stories: the story of the teaching of technical communication in the two-year college and my story as a teacher of technical communication.

Let's start at the beginning.

The telephone conversations with the English editor of a leading publishing house in New York City occurred in the last months of 1969, before the 1970 publication of our first book *Technical English:*

Writing, Reading, and Speaking. These conversations show that much more was at stake than names on a textbook.

What was really going on in those conversations did not become evident to co-author Ann and me for some time; nevertheless, there was something in each call from the editor that struck us as unfair, something that seemed to compromise our integrity as teachers, something that implied to us that we needed to rely on external sources or some kind of pretense in order for our book to be accepted by other teachers of technical writing. Specifics of our responses to the telephone calls follow:

1. An introduction by a recognized university professor: "We don't know this gentleman. From what you tell us, apparently he doesn't know much about technical writing, and he doesn't know much about junior colleges. We thank you, but 'no' to your kind offer."
2. Using only our initials rather than our given names: "Just a b-i-g minute. N. A. Pickett and A. A. Laster? That's not the way people know us. We like our names. Nell Ann. Ann. Full names. Or just forget the whole thing."
3. Omitting the name of our college: "In all the textbooks we've seen, the authors are identified by institution and sometimes also by city and state. We want the name of our college—Hinds Junior College—to appear on the title page with our names. It would also please us if Raymond, Mississippi, were added. But if you don't include the name of our college, just cancel the contract. And that's final."

Thus it came down to the wording of the title page that prompted us to look at the larger issues and articulate more precisely the unfairness that we felt—an unfairness that was so strong in each of us that we would never give in to those "editorial choices," even if it meant our book would never be published.

Besides, we had already given in several months earlier—against our better judgment—to one unshakable requirement of the editor. Originally, we had written the book in the second person, addressing the student audience as "you." The editor had insisted that textbooks did not use the more informal, friendlier tone of talking directly to the student. So we laboriously went back and changed the book to the third person: "the writer does this," "future technicians do such and such." Upon reflection, we realized we had made a mistake; we had let someone temporarily convince us to backtrack. The "you" issue

gave us the confidence to speak forthrightly and decisively when these later calls came.

In the second edition of the book, in 1975, we returned to the second person "you." This time, the editor agreed. We had learned a good bit about trusting our own sense of what speaks to students in print. And I think the editor was learning a thing or two about community college audiences and involving the student in the reading process.

So, to sum up, here is what was really going on between us as experienced two-year college teachers/neophyte authors and the editor at a 175-year-old publishing company. The editor had said that a well-known male professor from a recognized Eastern university would write an introduction endorsing the book, then that only our initials would be used with our last names, and finally that the name of our two-year college would be omitted. These editorial choices were fed to us one at a time with the expectation, I believe, that we would not seriously question the editor's judgment at press time concerning the front matter—the last folio to be printed.

Emerging from this whole experience of the front matter of our book in the closing year of the 1960s are these especially important implications:

- Names—of professors, institutions, universities—sell books, not the content.
- Authors who are or are assumed to be male are more creditable than are female authors of a technical writing textbook.
- Authors who are or are assumed to be from a four-year college or university are more creditable than are authors from a two-year college.
- A textbook by two-year college authors needs to be authorized by a four-year college name.
- The voice to be trusted is that of the editor rather than that of the teacher/author.

In essence, a technical writing textbook by two women who had not published before and who were from an obscure, rural, Southern junior college would not be accepted in the marketplace, would not sell.

Shortly after the publication in 1970 of *Technical English*, however, it became known as the first book designed specifically for freshman and sophomore introductory courses in technical writing. Nearly a half million copies and six editions later, the book continues to be a leader in its market.

Unexpected Beginnings

Assigned to teach technical writing in the fall of 1967 (my second year at a two-year college), I had never taken a writing course beyond composition as a college freshman in the 1950s. My lack of formal training in teaching writing, particularly technical writing, just never entered my mind, or apparently the mind of anyone else at the college.

With a sound record of three years of high school and four years of senior college teaching, I was considered a good hire. An earlier good hire—Ann Laster—and I were assigned to teach technical writing the same year. I was a farmer who could drive a tractor, calculate dusting for bollworm infestation, and work cattle. With Ann's similar experiences and her husband as instructor in mechanical technology, we welcomed the assignment of teaching technical writing.

When we found ourselves teaching technical writing, which we'd had no training for, we continued to ask every textbook publishing representative we saw, "What do you have available that is suitable for an introductory course in technical writing for our two-year college students?"

Usually the publishing representative would say, "I'm afraid we don't have anything that would fit what you are looking for."

Sometimes a rep might say, "Oh, we have an excellent book." But when we looked more closely, the book was designed for engineering majors in a technical writing course in the junior or senior year at a four-year institution. These students typically would have completed not only all their general education courses, but also advanced math courses and probably several courses in physics and chemistry, plus several courses in their engineering specialty. Not knowing any better, Ann and I attempted to use such a book the first year we were assigned to teach technical writing. After two weeks of frustration for students and teachers, we discarded the book.

In desperation we began churning out multipage handouts for our students. We showed how to analyze and then how to practice the kinds of writing that they would do on the job as technicians, as two-year college graduates with an Associate in Applied Science degree. These handouts evolved into teaching units on explaining procedures, describing mechanisms, analyzing causes and effects, giving reports, and writing letters.

We visited businesses and industries; we worked closely with technical instructors—sitting in on their classes, attending their departmental meetings, attending their craft committee meetings, inviting

them to help us plan class content and assignments. We interviewed technicians on the job; we collected examples of all types of technical writing wherever we went, from the state fair to the county health office to the department stores; we read, we assimilated, and we read, and we talked with each other and professionals in the field, and we read.

All of this was not only adding to my knowledge and skill as a teacher of technical communication, but was also enhancing my personal life in a very special way. The chair of our electronics technology department, Harry Partin, and I enjoyed working together immensely, and later we became husband and wife. Harry has been a big part of the development of our teaching materials.

When we had a half dozen or so teaching units all worked out to a usable stage, our college photocopied our typed material as a book and sold it through the campus bookstore. The bulky 8 1/2 × 11 × 1 3/4-inch book was spiral-bound so that it would lie open wherever the student was reading. All the units were set up similarly: a list of skills to be mastered, explanation of the importance of the skills for technicians on the job, real examples of the types of writing that technicians do, followed by classroom activities and writing assignments with plan sheets.

This approach put English in a different light for technical students majoring in agriculture, electronics, drafting, respiratory therapy, distribution and marketing, medical records, and other technical areas.

Then one day a rep on a return visit wandered into our office and quipped, "Are you still teaching technical writing?"

"You bet."

"And I bet you haven't found a book like you're looking for because there aren't any." We showed him our homemade book.

Another rep came by; he had heard we were writing a book . . . and then another rep; within months we had calls from a number of companies. Shortly thereafter we had offers of contracts from four major publishing houses for a technical writing textbook.

We hadn't started out to write a book. That thought would have been as foreign as winning an Olympic Gold Medal in gymnastics. What we were trying to do was prepare our technical students for their communication needs when they would enter the job market in the next one or two years.

A summarizing paragraph from my 1990 "Teaching Technical Communication in Two-Year Colleges" reflects how I would describe myself back then—a typical teacher trained in literature, suddenly thrust into the world of teaching technical writing:

> Teachers of technical communication in two-year colleges seem to be hard working and dedicated. They have heavy workloads and substandard salaries. Typically, they have taken the initiative in the offering of courses and programs. They see themselves highly qualified as teachers and highly committed to their profession. While not formally educated to teach technical communication by college courses or degrees, they have taught themselves by reading, by interacting with other professionals, by relying on their own resourcefulness, and by becoming practitioners of technical communication. (p. 84)

Enter Organizations: People, Contributions, Opportunity

Most of us enjoy the company of people we like, and often we like the people we get to know—particularly when there is an immediate common bond. Teaching technical writing was the common bond for me when I first began "interacting with other professionals" at the national level. Three organizations in particular gave me support and provided opportunities for professional growth.

The Southeastern Conference on English in the Two-Year College

My growth as a teacher of technical communication, as a professional, as a person, is inexorably intertwined with the growth and development of the Southeastern Conference on English in the Two-Year College (SCETC). Of all the entities that have shaped my life, none has been more influential than SCETC.

Soon after I started teaching at Hinds, the English department chair, Jim. El. Byrd Harris, said, "Nell Ann, I want you to go to the SCETC meeting next year. I believe you and SCETC can grow together."

I went, and we have. That next conference, the third SCETC, was in Biloxi, Mississippi, February 1968. Since then, I have missed only the 1970 SCETC conference, when I was on leave attending graduate school.

SCETC—one of the six regional conferences for two-year college teachers set up by the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) in 1965—provides almost unlimited opportunities. Almost anyone who wishes to be on a program as presenter, presider, or recorder or reader of one's own imaginative writing can do so.

My first program presentation was in February 1971, the Tutwiler Hotel, Birmingham, Alabama. Topic: "The Technical English Program."

Panel Members: Nell Pickett, Ann Laster, and a Florida teacher. That first program session on technical writing at SCETC was the beginning, I dare say, of the present Technical Communication Category, now a major segment of the annual SCETC convention.

SCETC is unbounded camaraderie, much small-group sharing, often entire English departments in attendance. While some of us have found husbands, lovers, and various souvenirs, many of us have also found a professional home—one that we look forward to revisiting each February.

NCTE Committee on Technical and Scientific Communication

Attending an NCTE convention in the early 1970s, I showed up at a meeting for people who teach technical writing. I had read the program. I taught technical writing. So I walked in—and was immediately welcomed as part of the group. (Only later did I realize that the meeting was for the *members* of the technical writing committee.)

Soon I received a letter inviting me to become a member of the committee, and since then, I have served continuously, including a term as chair, 1984–1987, on the NCTE Committee on Technical and Scientific Communication.

Through this committee, I have formed lasting friendships across the nation. Among the activities that the committee has regularly sponsored at the Annual Convention each November are workshops and program sessions. We have done three-day, two-day, and now one-day workshops from San Diego to New York to San Francisco to Boston to Chicago and other cities. Sometimes I wondered, "Am I the token two-year college person? Am I included only because, perhaps, our program proposals would be more favorably viewed if they included the two-year college?"

All along I was bothered about the lack of other two-year college teachers on the committee: Where are the other two-year college teachers of technical writing? When I voiced these concerns in the 1970s and 1980s, I got the same request again and again: "Please give me the names of people that you would recommend."

"Sure."

"And you know, of course, that the members of the committee are expected to attend our meetings."

Red flag! Most nominees from two-year colleges were stymied from the start. Serving a three-year term on the committee meant a commitment to attend committee meetings. Makes sense.

"Travel funds to attend a national meeting? Three years in a row? That's outlandish. I think maybe our president goes to some things regularly. For me? No way."

The Association of Teachers of Technical Writing

The Annual Convention of the Conference on College Composition and Communication, March 1974, New Orleans, a meeting room in the Roosevelt Hotel (now the Fairmont).

A dozen or so people. All men. Except two.

"Ma'am, can we help you find the room you are looking for?"

We had already found seats. We checked our program. This was the right room.

"We are very comfortable, thank you."

To this day, Ann Laster and I chuckle about those guys thinking that we were lost, that we couldn't find our way to the session we wanted to attend. As it turned out, this handful of technical writing teachers became the charter members of the Association of Teachers of Technical Writing (ATTW).

But what kept tugging at my mind was that we were the only two-year college teachers at that meeting.

From the acquaintance with a number of men in charge of ATTW emerged responsibilities and many good friendships through the years. In a few years, I was elected secretary-treasurer. Our membership began to double each year. "As I personally answer each query, respond to each membership application, monitor income and expenditures, I make decisions," I reported to the executive committee. "My office needs a name change." Immediately the position became Executive Secretary-Treasurer.

Serving in that capacity for ten years (1977–1986) and as a member of the editorial board from the inception of the ATTW journal *The Technical Writing Teacher* (now *The Technical Communication Quarterly*) plus other responsibilities has provided many opportunities for "interaction with other professionals."

Induction into the ATTW Society of Fellows, ATTW 1985 annual meeting at CCCC in Minneapolis, is still special to me in two ways. First, I feel honored that, perhaps, I met these criteria: "Nominees must have made significant long-term contributions to technical communication. It is expected that only members who have established national reputations based upon their teaching, scholarship, or academic administration will be considered." Second, it's special to me that I was the first two-year college person and the first woman to be so honored.

The Current State of Affairs in Technical Communication—Reflections

- Opportunities abound for the two-year college teacher of technical communication (and all two-year college teachers) to make a difference in the profession. To the two-year college teacher: (1) Believe in yourself. Recognize yourself as the one person with your particular experience and knowledge. (2) Invest in yourself. Investment (in your home, your children, the stock market, yourself) requires dollars and time—dollars to join professional organizations, to attend conferences, or scheduling time for professional reading, for writing. (3) Make your voice heard. Meet with others; share your ideas and concerns; originate activities; join with others in a plan for what you want to accomplish.
- While technical writing in the 1960s, 1970s, and early 1980s was taught primarily by males, many with a military background, by the end of the 1980s, the situation was far different. In the two-year college, the technical writing teacher was as likely to be female as male, just as in the entire population of two-year college faculty. (See earlier reference.) By 1992, ATTW had about an equal number of male and female members.
- Emerging in 1981 from the technical communication strand at the Annual Convention of the Southeastern Conference on English in the Two-Year College is the week-long summer Institute in Technical Communication (ITC). Sponsored by SCETC and held on the campus of Hinds Community College, it is now in its thirteenth year. It is the only national workshop in technical communication now in existence (in the past there were summer workshops in Washington, Michigan, New York, Virginia, Texas, Minnesota, and perhaps other states; the longest that any of those ran was ten years). They were all begun by individual male university professors and held on their respective campuses. ITC is the only summer institute originated by an organization and the only one initially directed by women. Each summer its participants are about equally from two-year and four-year institutions throughout the United States and Canada.
- I think that technical communication courses in most two-year colleges will continue to emphasize service to technical curricula with perhaps some growth in technical communication programs which prepare persons to become technical writers. A good portion of that growth will probably occur in continuing education

programs where persons in the work force are seeking a career change or want more opportunities for advancement.

- I see emerging in the 1990s and beyond better informed and better formally prepared teachers who possess a sound base in theory as well as in practical application.

Recently, a participant in the Institute in Technical Communication asked, "Nell Ann, what do you get out of all this? You must find it tremendously satisfying to be an originator of this workshop and to be a long-time teacher of technical communication."

Without hesitation: "What have I gotten? For a starter, the two most enduring friends of my life—my husband and my co-author/office mate/confidante. Furthermore, I can't imagine any other discipline that could offer such a rich life."

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13 Honors English in the Two-Year Colleges

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In the 1960s, the nationwide movement that provided higher education in two-year colleges intensified. The intent of this movement was to educate the masses. As a result, remediation of basic skills soon became an integral part of the curriculum in many community colleges. Students deficient in basic skills were allowed access to these colleges but needed to build a foundation for the regular curriculum. In Georgia and other states such remediation was mandated by the state in the early 1970s.

What about students at the other end of the spectrum? Slowly, honors programs emerged as a way to challenge the superior student who was enrolled in the two-year college. Today, honors classes and honors programs appear to be firmly entrenched in the two-year college.

Prior to the 1970s, there was little honors activity in the two-year college. Perhaps the concepts of gifted students, honors programs, and the academically talented smacked of elitism. After all, the mission of the two-year college was education for everyone; however, in the 1980s, according to George Vaughan (1984), the community college was experiencing a crisis of identity (p. 38). No longer could it pretend to be serving all of its students and ignore those superior students who matriculated on the two-year campus.

History of Honors in Two-Year Colleges

From 1945 to 1955, only thirty-five honors programs existed in two-year colleges (Koehnline, 1965, pp. 45–50). A 1961 survey by the American Association of Junior Colleges indicated that 119 programs

for superior students began between 1957 and 1961 (Hannelly & Menson, 1961, p. 10). In 1967, when the National Collegiate Honors Council attempted to survey honors opportunities in two-year colleges, only 11 of the 270 colleges polled reported honors provisions of any kind (Phillips, 1967, pp. 13–15). (These data differ noticeably from those of the 1961 survey by the American Association of Junior Colleges.) From a 1975 survey, the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges found that, of 644 responding institutions, only 47 had honors programs with formalized academic and administrative structure, but 80 percent, or 464 schools, had honors provisions such as honors classes, independent studies, credit by examination, and so on (Olivas, 1975, pp. 8–11). In the 1980s, Phi Theta Kappa, the national honor society for two-year colleges, reported a 40 percent increase in institutional members (Parsons, 1984, p. 1). Further, the number of two-year colleges joining the National Collegiate Honors Council also increased in the 1980s (p. 2). Yet, in spite of this increased honors activity, questions remain about the identification of honors students and the provisions for them in the setting of the two-year college.

Definition of Honors Students/Honors

In its broadest sense, *honors* consists of the total set of ways by which an academic institution attempts to meet the educational needs of its ablest students (Austin, 1975, p. 161). An honors class or an honors program is a planned set of arrangements for the potentially superior student. It is apparent that the term *honors* is relative to the particular institution, since the academically superior or talented student whose needs are not being met in the average classroom is a candidate for honors in that setting. The student with a 1200 SAT score, a high school average of B, and excellent college placement scores on the institution's test for entrance would be a candidate for honors at East Georgia College. The potential is there; if not challenged, this B-average high school student may drop out of school from boredom and join the work force, seeking intellectual stimulation elsewhere.

In 1976 at East Georgia College, the English faculty found that out of twenty-five students with SAT verbal scores of 500 or better (total SAT scores of 950–1150), only five earned an A in freshman English and five withdrew by the second quarter. Since the students had the strongest verbal skills in the student body, the faculty determined to offer these students an opportunity to take an honors English class,

which had been deliberately designed to encourage the good student and curtail the dropout of the *honors* students (Bridges, 1981, p. 31). This personal illustration shows that the term is relative to the institution. Colleges need to survey their students to find out if the school's superior students are being challenged by their current offerings. Two-year colleges should implement programs to promote excellence for the superior student who is in attendance on their particular campus.

Students' Reasons for Enrolling in Two-Year Colleges

Tuition costs, as well as transportation and housing costs, have stretched the family income so that the high-ability students now attend two-year colleges in larger numbers. Even with financial aid and tuition scholarships, the talented or gifted student often does not have sufficient funds to attend a four-year college or university. The decline in government-supported financial aid undoubtedly intensifies this trend. While enrolled in the local community college, students often work to save money for the last two college years.

Others enroll in two-year colleges part-time, working at a job while taking classes in occupational and technical programs. These non-transfer students are often neglected in the honors concept. Other students of high ability may be part-time because of family obligations. These strong academic students have selected the two-year local college because of its convenience to their situations. This group often includes the "late bloomers" and nontraditional students.

Some choose to stay home and attend a two-year college in order to make a gradual adjustment to college. Some prefer a smaller institution for a year or two. The reasons vary, but the two-year college has been enrolling superior students in greater numbers. Their presence prompts the community college to consider the academically superior in its curriculum plans. Providing higher standards while maintaining access for every student has presented a dilemma. The answer appears to be the inclusion of honors opportunities in the two-year college.

The Benefits of Honors Programs

Students, faculty, and the college itself benefit from honors activities. For the student, the benefits include small classes taught by outstanding faculty; recognition of honors achievements on transcripts, diplo-

mas, certificates; participation in honors-related events; interaction with students of similar ability; entrance into top colleges; stronger résumés; and stronger recommendations for jobs. Faculty benefits include working with these gifted students, developing new courses, creating new approaches, and being challenged to counter boredom and to avoid burnout.

The college itself will have the overall quality of its offerings enhanced. A visible honors program will not only attract superior students and faculty, but will also enhance the college's public image. Honors programs have a positive impact on retention of both the intelligent student and the effective teacher. In addition, developing honors classes and programs stimulates revival of original thinking for curriculum and assessment. The innovation can benefit the entire institution as speakers are invited, seminars and programs are planned and presented to the entire student body, and new and revised curriculum offerings inspire and motivate the other faculty and students.

The reinvigorated faculty, the stimulation in the learning atmosphere, reduction in the number of dropouts among the most talented, enthusiastic students, and community support are some of the chief benefits. The status quo is not enough in the honors setting; an honors program changes a two-year college.

Honors English

Current controversy over ability grouping and the increasing popularity of cooperative learning in gifted programs throughout the country have had one profound effect on honors programs in colleges: a heightened awareness of the ability-grouping practice and special classes for the bright student. Whereas a simple separate class in honors English may be the only sign of honors on a two-year campus, as is the case at East Georgia College, the response nationwide is to embrace a variety of practices, including acceleration and ability grouping in combination with cooperative learning (Mills & Durden, 1992, p. 11).

Truly, honors curricula take a variety of forms. According to the 1975 survey by the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, the four most frequently cited honors opportunities were advanced placement and credit by examination, honors classes, awards such as scholarships, and membership in honor societies (Olivas, 1975, pp. 8–11). Independent study also has had wide acceptance in honors programs for English and other classes since the 1970s.

Ability grouping is the method reported by most college honors programs for the honors classes in the 1990s; however, this alone is not enrichment. Enrichment usually requires small classes for dialogue with mature, intelligent teachers. Joseph Cohen (1966) says that the superior student wants to be compelled to question and reexamine (p. 54). The seminar is a popular format because it encourages participation. Lecturing, whenever possible, is kept to a minimum; primary sources and original documents usually replace textbooks in the honors class. The instructor must be adept in this academic setting to work with the high-ability student (Austin, 1975, p. 163). Effective teachers must be situational leaders; that is, "they must consciously and willingly change their style to meet the demands and challenges of the teaching situation" (Baker, Roueche, & Gillett-Karam, 1990, p. 31). Honors students, though capable of working independently some of the time, need the companionship of students and faculty who share their interests, according to C. Grey Austin (1975, p. 165).

In an honors class, a subject such as English can be an exciting adventure. Incorporated into the class can be opportunities for independent projects, critical thinking, field trips, stimulating speeches, additional or more demanding reading, creative writing, forums, debates, extended travel excursions, and one-on-one conferences. The combinations of ingredients vary in each college, but the aim to challenge the superior student is constant. Two examples—one of an honors program and one of an honors class in freshman composition—illustrate the diversity of honors opportunities available in two-year colleges.

Academic excellence in the two-year college is the demand of our profession, according to Laird Edman (1991–92), honors program director at Waldorf College in Iowa. The centerpiece of its honors program is Philosophy 200, team-taught by seven instructors of different disciplines. Only primary texts are read. Independent study is an integral part of this program; research methodology is taught in "Research Writing in the 21st Century," a component in the program in conjunction with independent study (p. 27).

At East Georgia College, the honors English composition class curriculum is theoretically based on James Moffett's writing theory. Biographies and autobiographies are the reading materials, and an original biography is the long-term independent project. All but the first two essays explore ideas from the readings; the first two assignments are personal narratives and descriptive essays. Open discussion, teacher-student conferences, peer evaluation, field trips, guest speakers (usually writers), and films are included in the curriculum design (Bridges,

1981, pp. 37–45). Continual evaluation since 1980 has meant a change in texts but thus far not in format or theory.

Projections for the 1990s

In the 1980s, the honors concept experienced a renaissance. Now the mission of the community college definitely includes the needs of the academically able student. The two-year college, with its low cost and ease of access, has emerged as a place where academic achievement is encouraged and rewarded. When economic conditions improve in the United States, most institutions that have honors classes can be expected to expand them into full-fledged honors programs. As more and more students select community colleges for their first two college years, colleges without programs for superior students can be expected to add them. Norm Neilson (1991), president of Kirkwood Community College in Iowa, states that the two-year college must expand its services and resources to the superior students. He feels that the two-year college is quite capable of providing both quality and accessibility (p. 47).

Financial support, dedicated faculty, specified admissions criteria, creative program designs, and small class size: the honors classes and programs thrive with these elements to enhance them. The overall future of honors in the two-year college appears clear as the national economy levels off in the 1990s. Today, the two-year college recognizes and serves all strata of society and both ends of the intellectual spectrum.

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14 Writing in Cyberspace: Communication, Community, and the Electronic Network

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Discourse in cyberspace is anecdotal and anarchistic. More and more written communication is taking place within an electronic context. Little of this writing is printed, yet most of it is read, and much of it is responded to by other writers. The response is more immediate and more direct than the response to print media because electronic writing is usually published as soon as it is composed. Many writers who publish in conventional print media never hear from their readers; however, most writers who are published electronically take part in a series of praise and blame interchanges with other writers.

Electronic communications networks are available to individuals with personal computers and modems and to employees of companies and universities whose terminals are connected to computer networks. Compuserve, America Online, GEnie, The Whole Earth 'Lectronic Link, Usenet, the local bulletin board run by kids who are aficionados of industrial music or by the local astronomy club—all sorts of electronic conferences and boards, echoes and internet nodes, the electronic memos you read and answer at work and school—are part of the growing context of electronic communication, which many have followed science fiction writer William Gibson (1984) in calling "cyberspace."

Local, national, and worldwide electronic communities are burgeoning. One need only look at the various bills before Congress that propose to control cyberspace—bills for and against the fiber-optic National Research and Education Network (NREN)—to see that the

phenomena of electronic communication are at the forefront of what is becoming a communication, rather than an industrial, culture.

Although much of cyberspace contains software written in various computer languages, sound, and graphic materials, most electronic communication still uses human language. And since many multimedia communications packages—and even the virtual reality engines that are starting to replace the video games in local bars and shopping malls—show great promise for future communication, the implications that follow will also apply to communication media in general.

The conventions for written communication in cyberspace are quite different from those of print media. These changes foreshadow a postindustrial discourse that may well include pictures, text, and artificial, computer-generated realities, changes about which we should feel optimistic.

We, as educators, ought to prepare students for writing within an electronic context because it better prepares them for their future careers that will involve writing in cyberspace. Skills in composing and navigating within electronic networks are required in more and more workplaces. But second, and more important, the implications of the new cyberspace writing conventions look forward to cultural changes that will help us overcome many of the disastrous effects of industrial culture, effects which threaten the world community and even the world itself.

Because electronic communication is often interactive with many participants, the rhetorical model for expository writing can no longer be the one-way, extended oration, a speech directed from one to many that implies the last word of authority. A more appropriate model is the conversation with many participants who contribute equally to the content and direction of the text. Many and various speech acts are contained within a single hyperdocument, a continually changing network of electronic contexts.

As teachers of communication, we must accept that this new territory—cyberspace—is a fact in the future of our students. We must also accept that new techniques must be found to train our students to be pioneers within this electronic world. We can no longer ask our students to become skilled orators and essayists, the bosses and evaluators of industrial culture, the culture of dominance. But we must accept the implications of the conversation model, where all are equal participants within a culture of partnership.

The oration is a model based on a political speech. The structure we teach students to use when writing expository prose for print publica-

tion uses strategies of rhetoric. "Strategy" is from the Greek word for military general and implies a battlefield metaphor. Teachers tell students to *defend a position*, to *marshal* evidence, to make an *attack* when writing. A winner-loser consciousness that presents the essay as a tactic in the ideological war of words is enforced. War defines the dominative culture.

After the essay is written, the writing is assessed. Today, in Florida, the law requires students to take and pass a timed writing which is evaluated holistically. The students must pass this test before becoming juniors in the university or before being granted an Associate of Arts degree from a community college. Many other states are instituting similar tests. Holistic grading is a complex process, but the recurring theme heard at holistic grading sessions is a simple question: Does the student demonstrate control? Within the context of evaluation, the ultimate arbiter of success is *control*. Does the student control her idea, her paragraphs, her sentences, her words? Just as the phenomena of war defines a dominative culture, value in a dominative culture bows to the authority of control. Keats's magic hand of chance has no place in "good" writing in this model.

Today states and corporations are empowered by technology to such an extent that they can destroy not only the world community, but also the world itself. If the dominative culture continues to be all pervasive, even to the extent that its conventions are enforced upon the way we write, then doom seems inevitable. The final consequence of war is nuclear annihilation, and the final consequence of the authority of control is ecological disaster.

Conversations, on the other hand, provide a different model for discourse, one that we believe better suits electronic texts. Although a conversation may grow fierce, it is, by definition, a free exchange of ideas and speech acts without a winner or a loser. All participants learn from conversations; all are changed. No individual controls a conversation, and no individual wins or loses. Good conversations are full of surprises. Think about the film *My Dinner with André* (1982).

Technology, therefore, also provides a possible solution to the problem of control. Although not an immediate panacea, the birth (or possibly rebirth) of a partnership culture may come along with an international, user-friendly, ubiquitous, and inexpensive electronic communications network. A system like this could create a worldwide conversation. The conversation as a communication model would provide the foundation for the partnership culture and lead us toward an antidote to the poisonous rhetoric of control and destruction, toward world peace and a symbiotic relationship with our planet. We, as

educators, must therefore explore the new conventions of writing in cyberspace and find new value in the anecdotal, anarchistic communication model, the conversation.

Creating an Extended Electronic Conversation

Not all that long ago, long-distance telephone calls were rare and surprising things. We remember our fathers running into the backyard, calling for our mothers to come talk on the telephone to Aunt Helen from Idaho. We remember, too, that it was usually bad news about Uncle Frank. Long-distance calls were extraordinary, something reserved for special occasions: deaths, accidents, major holidays.

Over time, of course, the telephone company (more recently "companies") have convinced us that long-distance telephoning is an ordinary occurrence: AT&T's "Reach Out and Touch Someone"™ probably remains the most famous of these campaigns. But MCI's "Friends and Family"™ has moved us even further toward accepting the intensely personal and immediate aspect of long-distance telephone communication. It seems to us that we now regard virtual conferencing (synchronous electronic conferencing at a distance) in education in the same way that we thought about long-distance telephoning in the early 1960s.

It's interesting to note, by the way, that business didn't need much encouragement to pick up the phone and hawk someone (or something). Business quickly saw the utility of the telephone, and in the same way, business has been among the first sectors of our society to exploit the possibilities of virtual conferencing, from conference calls to satellite board meetings. But we've begun to see the potential for virtual conferencing in education, too. In some ways, we've done just enough virtual conferencing to question the value of doing it.

Even as early long-distance telephone connections were raucous with static, unpredictable, and often undependable—vastly different from the quality of interstate, intercountry, and even intercontinental communication we ordinarily enjoy today—today's virtual conferencing is nothing like what we'll be doing a few years from now. Therefore, we believe it is important to continue using virtual conferencing in writing classes.

We have conducted two semesters of writing classes between St. Petersburg Junior College in St. Petersburg, Florida, and Jackson Community College in Jackson, Michigan, and our experiment convinces

us that electronic conversations offer intriguing new possibilities for writing instruction, possibilities that diverge from traditional methods of instruction for print-based writing.

Both classes met in computer-integrated classrooms consisting of stand-alone personal computers networked for file sharing. At least once a week, we joined our classes over ordinary, dial-up phone lines, using Shiva 9600 bps netmodems, and the *Interchange* portion of the *Discourse* package from the Daedalus Group, Inc. The cost of connecting our classrooms this way was not exorbitant. For the first semester, the total of all calls made (including voice connections when we planned class sessions and/or debriefed them afterward) was around $200.

In a so-called "process" writing class, the writing workshop evolves quite naturally: Once the emphasis shifts from produced texts to producing texts, the teacher's role shifts, too, from authority or absolute arbitrator to guide and fellow traveler. The writing workshop—where students and teachers share in the creation, analysis, and revision of texts—comes about naturally in this cooperative environment.

In the same way, virtual conferencing evolves in a networked electronic classroom. The essence of a network is connection. Once this idea is grasped, the question becomes, "Where can I get to from here?" These conversations in cyberspace, as the introduction to this essay suggests, differ from the activities one usually observes in writing classes: they are "anecdotal" and "anarchistic." But underlying the surface chaos is the same kind of structure which resides in good conversation. There is an ebb and flow to themes, and, if it continues long enough, a conversation eventually focuses itself and develops some of the ideas which have been presented. The conversations between our writing classes likewise frequently began in disorder. In fact, participants (including the teachers) sometimes left a conversation wondering whether any part of it had been focused on a single topic. The transcripts of the sessions revealed, however, that certain themes did come into focus, at least in a leisurely rereading a day or two later. And one of the ways in which our conversations were very much like other print-based communication was in the creation of a more or less permanent record. We could review our conversations whenever we liked.

Excerpts from these transcripts do not provide a clear view of the way in which our conversations influenced our students' writing. The process of selection seems to foreground the fragmentary qualities of the discourse and de-emphasize the thematic ebb and flow. We are

confident, however, that our electronic conversation shaped not only students' attitudes toward the topics, but also their beliefs about writing. They wrote to and for actual readers who responded in real time.

Typically, our class sessions began with everyone reading a note that one of us had posted. Sometimes our introductory notes highlighted a point that was raised in a previous conversation. At other times we introduced a topic that (we hoped) would serve as the focus for that day's discussion. Occasionally, especially in the second semester, when our students read a common text, we started a session with an excerpt from a reading assignment. Poems worked especially well because of their brevity, but we often included excerpts from essays, short stories, or writer's biographies as well.

We saw our role as one of facilitator rather than monitor, and while we participated in conversations, we did not direct them. In fact, we probably talked less in these classes than in any other classes we have taught. We encouraged students to form subgroups based on topics that interested them and helped them set up conversations. Smaller groups made for increased participation, just as they would in face-to-face conversation, and we believe that students found it easier to focus on a single topic when they did so.

"Flaming"—hostile or aggressive postings—seems to be a universal feature of electronic conversation. We rarely intervened directly in such incidents, but we did talk privately with some students about how their tone and language were interpreted by others. In keeping with our roles as facilitators, however, we did not attempt to censor students' language. Instead, we created a separate conference (usually entitled "Small Talk") where people could use any kind of language they wished. We believe that providing a separate conference protected students who didn't want to read strong (and sometimes vulgar) language, while at the same time encouraged everyone to participate. And we were pleased to note that the conversations in "Small Talk" often paralleled those in the other conferences, and that Small Talk participants frequently read those conferences as well.

Because our students were able to converse with each other only during class times—although they were able to trade drafts of papers, comments, etc., with our assistance—collaborating on entire papers was problematic. Nevertheless, students enjoyed our conversations and eagerly anticipated them. Attendance in the classes that were part of this experiment was more regular than in other writing classes, and students expressed strong disappointment on the days we were unable to connect our classrooms because of scheduling conflicts or difficulty with the equipment.

Cyberspace and Education

Because revolutionary demographic and technological changes are occurring at an ever-increasing speed, the educational community of the future cannot be limited by cultural or physical boundaries. The rapidly expanding worldwide electronic communication network redefines the meaning of "community" and provides a vehicle for multicultural and long-distance learning.

Because of high-speed data transfer, communication by picture, sound, and text is not limited by geographical boundaries. And because of the unlimited diversity of sources that the network provides, the content of network communication is not restricted to canonical texts or ideas, becoming instead a true conversation in which all participants share in the discovery of facts and the creation of knowledge.

If two-year community colleges are to remain open-door institutions, their communications departments must incorporate curricula and pedagogy that allow students to flourish—students of diverse cultural backgrounds and students outside geographical boundaries. Community college communications departments should, therefore, provide electronic access, teach navigation of the electronic network, and offer electronic, multimedia courses in composition and other disciplines as well.

"Virtual" Is a Metaphor

There's an anecdote by the philosopher Sextus Empiricus in his book about skeptical philosophy (see Loeb, 1961). Sextus Empiricus was talking about a psychological phenomenon that is known as—and for which he coined the word *ataraxia* in order to illustrate—a calmness. He said that the skeptical philosophers in the beginning were attempting to achieve a state of mind in which the discrepancies between objects of thought and objects of sense could be reconciled. Eventually they found that by shrugging their shoulders and ignoring the discrepancies and ignoring the contradictions, they were able to find this peaceful state of nonjudgment, a suspension of judgment.

At the beginning of his text, Sextus illustrates this concept with an anecdote about Apelles. Apelles was the court painter for Alexander the Great. The court painter's chief function was to document the exploits of his king. At one point he was attempting to paint a painting which portrayed the act of the king in battle. And within that battle, he was trying to capture the froth that was issuing from the mouth of a

horse. He failed to do so. He was quite frustrated, so eventually he took a sponge and just daubed at the mouth of the horse to mark the place where in the future he would attempt to paint the froth. Paradoxically, daubing with the sponge caused the froth to look perfect, and he was surprised. The philosopher Sextus Empiricus says this is an example of *ataraxia*, the accidental discovery of the perfect image.

Sextus Empiricus uses the communication technology of his time—painting is a documentation and transmission-of-information device—as a vehicle of a metaphor for a philosophical concept. Thus, the history of this kind of metaphor is the history of the interface between technology and human beings. This illustrates the evolution of culture.

The scenarios we use to describe our pursuit of knowledge, the images we find for the places where knowledge is stored, and the narratives we create to illustrate the passage of knowledge from one generation to the next, all evolve along with technology.

The rapid evolution of computer technology demands that the educator revise his or her teaching theory if students are going to participate in what Stewart Brand, noted writer in computer technology, calls "co-evolution." The recent history of the computer/user interface may be used as a metaphor for cultural evolution. The change from command-driven to menu-driven to icon-driven interfaces reflects in microcosm the transformation of the magical worldview to the post-industrial worldview.

Virtual reality (VR) as a computer interface would be absolutely transparent. A computer-generated, three-dimensional world that responds to eye movement, body motion, and voice would make anyone who is capable of functioning in the physical world capable of using a computer. Today, the virtual reality systems are extremely simple. But think back to not so long ago, when Pong was an exciting phenomenon that enabled the average citizen to interact with a video screen. Compare that with the virtual reality games that are appearing in the same bars where Pong first appeared, and then imagine what VR will be capable of soon.

Information access within a VR environment resembles the way Ralph Waldo Emerson described the phenomenal world:

> Undoubtedly we have no questions to ask which are unanswerable. We must trust the perfection of the creation so far, as to believe that whatever curiosity the order of things has awakened in our minds, the order of things can satisfy. Every man's condition is a solution in hieroglyphic to those inquiries he would put. He acts it as life, before he apprehends it as truth. In like manner,

> nature is already, in its forms and tendencies, describing its own design. Let us interrogate the great apparition, that shines so peacefully around us. (from "Nature")

In other words, within Emerson's transcendental philosophy, questions about the world of nature can be answered directly by nature. So also within a VR environment, questions about the computer can be answered directly within the system without the necessity of referring to a users' manual or to a memorized body of esoteric information. We think it is significant that Emerson uses the word "hieroglyphic," because a hieroglyphic looks like what it represents, much like the icons within a Macintosh environment look like what they represent. The great apparition of virtual reality would be the computer-generated world where data would not be accessed but would be traveled to and experienced.

Conclusion

Historically, the discourse community which is most important to higher education is the community of scholars. Over time, of course, this community shifted dimensions. In some ages, only those who spoke and wrote Latin could be included in the community of scholars. In other ages, the boundaries shifted to include the Queen's English or the dialect recognized by the Académie Français. In our century, the most important discourse community in higher education has been the one which uses Edited American English (EAE).

As we all know, however, changes in demographics and, indeed, society itself, have brought increasing numbers of students to higher education whose primary language is sometimes far removed from EAE. Many of us who teach writing to first-year students have been puzzled when we receive our first paper from a bright, articulate student whose written work seems to be done with none of the student's wit and insight. Or we might notice a similar difference between a student's informal writing in a journal or in-class response and the first formal essay.

In the same way, texts that to us seem straightforward and simple to decode often present our students with exceptional challenges. Essays that we might find well-developed and persuasive to them seem repetitive and boring. Whatever the reason—and one hears blame placed on everything from television to the "downwriting" of newspapers and popular magazines to the decline of the nuclear family—it is clear that fewer and fewer of our students come to us with well-de-

veloped skills in reading and writing EAE. We are not part of our students' language community when we begin a semester. If the class is successful, we may be part of the same community by the end. But we are not at the beginning.

Critics of education in the United States have often cited this change in our students' language skills as a contributing cause in the alleged decay of our colleges and universities. In *Illiberal Education*, for example, Dinesh D'Souza (1991) defends selectivity in higher education. The university system is a hierarchy with the most selective institutions at the top. D'Souza argues that university admission and curriculum should be based on the selectivity principle: curriculum should be what Matthew Arnold called "the best that has been thought and said," and admission should be to the best and the brightest.

D'Souza blames affirmative action and multiculturalism for the injustices within highly selective universities. D'Souza claims that the origin of the injustice in admissions is the policy that allows people into the university who ought not to be allowed. He blames injustice in curriculum on the policy that advocates teaching things in the university that ought not to be taught. He's got it backward. In admission, the injustice is not caused by letting people in but by keeping people out. In curriculum, the injustice is not caused by teaching certain things but by not teaching certain things. In other words, the injustices that D'Souza exposes within the universities are not caused by affirmative action or by multiculturalism but by the definitive characteristic of the university system itself, the selectivity principle.

Selectivity is obsolete. Limiting enrollment and limiting curriculum is necessary only if educational resources are limited. The technological advances of the past decade and the promise of further advances in the near future make it possible for universities to open their doors and, like community colleges, provide education to everyone, not just to those who are deemed worthy because of arbitrary or ideological standards of admission. These technologies can also provide the vehicle for curriculum to become truly multicultural, an amorphous anarchy that could grow organically because of student interest, individual need, and the value of knowledge, not a prescribed list of great ideas chosen by the few for the many.

The ever-increasing heterogeneity of higher education requires that a new kind of discourse community be created. Rather than having a single language standard imposed on would-be scholars by the institutions which educate and later employ them, the postmodern society should seek instead to promote a discourse community rising out of

the interaction of its members. In higher education, this means exposing students to the widest possible variety of language uses and purposes and, furthermore, forging connections between groups in distant locations. The age of the professor is over. No longer will teachers be the repositories of knowledge and dictators of truth—but they will become guides who act as explorers with their students of the electronic knowledge bases open to everyone. One's knowledge will no longer be judged by what one can remember, but on how well one can navigate.

We are not proposing (yet) that teachers abandon the effort to introduce students to the print culture that forms the basis for most of our education. But we do see electronic networks—both as we are using them in the teaching of writing, and in their expanding role as information sources—as playing a useful role in the creation of a new kind of discourse community, one more appropriate to the "world without walls" we are coming increasingly to inhabit. We advocate a universal open-door policy and a curriculum which grow organically from the usage of the system. The nation's interstate highway system was not designed by the informed few who prescribed where people ought to travel in physical space. It provides a free, well-maintained system of high-speed roadways connecting every main urban center in the United States. So also the electronic information system should provide free access for people who want to travel in cyberspace to access information and to gain knowledge. The information network, if uncorrupted by those who wish to protect the knowledge hoard of the select few, will become the truly democratic university of tomorrow, providing information and power to all: a community college for the world community.

We began our collaboration with few preconceptions about what shape it might take—for example, we started with the assumption that working together did not mean doing identical classes, but rather, cooperating on activities. Although we did not meet face-to-face until our project had been underway for some six months, we communicated daily by telephone and phone-computer hook-up. We believe that our experience encouraged us—and should encourage others—to seek more opportunities for working cooperatively and collaboratively in using various electronic networks. While it is too early to advocate supplanting traditional group interactions with cyberspace ones, the ability of virtual interactions to promote a sharper and entirely language-based notion of self in relationship to audience makes them a powerful tool for writing teachers.

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III Faculty

15 Community College Teaching: Endless Possibilities

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In 1974, my job application for a position at Essex Community College included two short essays. One of the subjects I had to write about was the role of a comprehensive community college. My response to this prompt must have been acceptable, but when I wrote it, I had no idea of what I was talking about. During the years since I wrote that essay, I have begun to understand the role of the community college and to realize the countless opportunities available to community college teachers.

When I began work at Essex Community College, my teaching responsibilities were clear-cut: I was to teach three to four sections of the college's developmental English course. In addition, I was to complete my fifteen-hour teaching load with English 101 ("Composition and Rhetoric") and English 102 ("Composition and Literary Forms"). This regular teaching load outlined my job, but it definitely did not indicate its possibilities.

Choices about where and when I taught were the first opportunities that community college teaching provided me. During the 1970s, Essex offered courses at various off-campus sites. I got to teach developmental English at the main office of Blue Cross and Blue Shield, where my class took place at the end of the regular workday in a conference room with a portable blackboard and a few long tables. My students were administrators and staff members who were more interested in improving their job skills than they were in a college degree. Similarly, I taught freshman composition to workers for Martin Marietta, the aerospace contractor. There, I taught in a makeshift classroom in one of the hangars. During that semester, I learned to ignore the factory noises that often accompanied my lessons and to adapt my assignments and approach to the needs of adult factory workers. Later on,

these two experiences were followed by classes in Baltimore County high schools and in a church. In these cases, my classes contained workers who wanted to enhance existing job skills or develop new ones; high school students who wanted enrichment; and other adult learners who wanted a taste of college life without having to leave their neighborhoods.

A few years after I arrived at the college, Essex began an exchange program with Goucher, a nearby, private four-year college. For three semesters, I taught one of my five courses there. The first semester I taught a developmental course because Goucher felt that some of its freshmen could benefit from such a class, and the following semester, I offered a freshman composition class. Then I presented a course in minority literature because Goucher had no such offering.

Finally, two of Essex's off-campus sites were at prisons in Jessup, Maryland. Because teaching inmates at a correctional institution was something I wanted to try, I asked to teach in this program. I soon found myself teaching within prison walls. In one prison, after walking through a metal detector and passing through several sets of electric doors, I proceeded across the prison grounds to a special classroom building that had very well-equipped, modern classrooms with no bars on the windows. In the other prison, the entrance routine included a metal detector, being "patted down," and having my bags checked. In this facility, getting to my classroom involved walking down a long hall lined with four tiers of cells to a short tunnel that led to another wing of the prison. There I found blackboards with barely any slate remaining on them, radiators that clanged as I taught, and, of course, bars on all of the windows. Despite the conditions, I truly loved to teach in this place. Having the whole atmosphere work against me, I had to do everything in my power to keep my students involved in what was going on in class. For nine years, I offered one or more of my classes at the prisons.

Closely related to choices about where and when I taught were options about whom I taught. After a few years at the college, I discovered a program on campus that I did not know existed. Every Wednesday, a group of senior citizens meets at the college. During the morning and the afternoon, two special courses are offered for this group. These courses, which are sometimes designed by full-time faculty members, last from four to eight weeks. When I first heard about the Friendly Seniors Program, I immediately contacted the director and asked how I could become involved. Once I taught in this program, I discovered a teaching situation like none I had ever faced before. My class included some students with no higher education and others with

graduate degrees. Some students came just to listen, but many were more actively involved than any students I had had before. When I concluded my first class and the students applauded (something they do at the end of every class), I knew that I had found a home.

Over the years, I have taught the Friendly Seniors four times. First, I pursued one of my interests with an introductory course on Ernest Hemingway. After discussing Hemingway's life, I dealt with several of his short stories and then with *A Farewell to Arms*. Because I soon found out that some of my forty to sixty students would read everything very closely, while others would read nothing at all, I made adaptations to the normal way I cover a literary work. First, I would be sure to talk in detail about plot and to read enough selections from each work so that everyone could get the gist of the story. Also, I would regularly use films so that the nonreaders could actively participate in the discussions. Once I finished Hemingway, the seniors asked me to come up with another course. For this second course, "A Short Story Sampler," I alternated films from the PBS short story series with some of my favorite short stories. Next, I decided to create a course that would appeal specifically to the seniors. "Images of Aging" included plays (e.g., *The Gin Game*), short stories (e.g., "Golden Honeymoon"), films (e.g., *On Golden Pond*), and novels (e.g., *As We Are Now*). Finally, I offered "An Introduction to Flannery O'Connor," once again taking one of my interests to an audience that just wanted to continue learning.

Later on during the 1980s, the college started an honor's program. Students use previous test scores or evidence of high-quality work at Essex to support their application to be part of this program. Once they are admitted to the honor's program, they are entitled to enroll in one or more specially designed courses each semester. These courses feature small class sizes (fifteen students or less) and a seminar setting. The work in these classes is to be different in kind rather than amount from regular courses.

A year ago, and again more recently, I offered an honor's version of English 102, "Composition and Literary Forms," a course which is a graduation requirement for all full-time students at Essex. This course normally includes an introduction to literature, a research paper, and other writing assignments about literature. Most instructors teach individual genres or proceed thematically during the literature segment of this course.

When I was asked to teach an honor's version of English 102, I at first thought about declining because I was having trouble coming up with a way to teach this course that would meet the aims of English 102 and still be unique. Then I reconsidered the benefits of teaching an

honor's class: small class size, highly motivated students, and the opportunity to make a significant change in a class that I had taught many times.

Eventually, I determined that I would have my honor's students study four authors in depth instead of having them look at numerous authors for a day or two at a time. I chose Flannery O'Connor, Richard Wright, Henrik Ibsen, and Robert Frost. In each case, I decided to add a few additional readings so that the students would not be considering the authors in a vacuum. For instance, with Flannery O'Connor, the students read five stories by her, but they also studied works by Nathaniel Hawthorne, William Faulkner, and Alice Walker. These additional stories allowed them to look at an early influence on O'Connor, at another Southern Renaissance writer, and at a writer who was influenced by O'Connor. When the class moved on to Richard Wright, my students were able to compare the southern experiences of these two authors and to note the similarities and differences between their works.

Yet another set of options that community college teaching offered me involved how I taught. When I began teaching at Essex, all developmental students took the same course, English 9, and every instructor used the same materials (a small collection of grammar exercises and writing assignments that were developed by members of the department or borrowed from other sources) and the same approach (individualized instruction with an emphasis on rhetorical modes and the paragraph).

Early on, I approached two senior faculty members about developing better materials. Together we created classroom materials that used a step-by-step approach to teach students to write paragraphs that were unified, developed, coherent, and consistent in point of view. To these materials, we added explanations of the rhetorical modes so that students could write paragraphs in which they practiced the skills they had already learned. Finally, we produced materials on how to write essays to help the students bridge the gap between their developmental class and their freshman composition course. Beyond these materials on writing, we greatly expanded the department's collection of grammar and mechanics exercises.

Soon afterward, when a publisher approached us about putting our materials together in a textbook, we agreed to do so on the condition that it would be relatively easy to change the text as our ideas evolved. (Over the years, we have revised this text four times, each time trying to eliminate or revise exercises that did not work and to add additional materials and exercises.)

A few years later, I joined other faculty members in creating a new developmental course, English 8. Within our English 9 classrooms, we had discovered that about ten percent of the students had problems that were significantly greater than those of their peers. These students often had serious learning disabilities or particularly severe problems with grammar and mechanics. For these student, we created English 8, which introduced the paragraph but also concentrated on a few basic grammar topics.

More recently, I worked with my colleagues to introduce new approaches to teaching developmental classes so that teachers could emphasize their strengths in the classroom and students could have more options about the way they received instruction. In my own case, I switched from totally individualized instruction to a combination of individualized and peer-group instruction. In addition, I began devoting at least one-third of my developmental course to the essay.

The same sorts of opportunities were available in my freshman composition class. When I began teaching at Essex, I used the same approach, lecture/discussion, and the same reader, one that emphasized literature and the rhetorical modes, that I used as a teaching fellow in graduate school. In addition, just as I had done in graduate school, I collected papers and turned them back with comments and a final grade. I quickly discovered that the latter system was not working, so I started to use conferencing so that I could give my students advice before I graded their papers. Moreover, I began to encourage revisions of already graded papers. This change allowed students to make immediate use of my suggestions for improving their writing. Over the years, I made other changes. For instance, I replaced about half the conferencing sessions with peer reviews. In this case, my goal was for students to become better editors of their own writing by learning how to help others edit their papers. Finally, I replaced a mode-centered approach with an emphasis on writing across the curriculum and writing for a purpose. These latter approaches to teaching writing reflected the needs of my students, changes in my beliefs about how writing should be taught, and changing theory on composition and its teaching. All of these changes were possible because I was at a college that allowed me to grow as a teacher instead of dictating what and how I should teach.

Finally, I was able to alter my English 102, "Composition and Literary Forms," class. This course evolved from one where I was almost always the center of the classroom to one which became more and more student centered. One of the student-centered activities that I use involves having all of my students write two or three questions about

a given work. Then, during class, the students assume the role of any type of teacher they want to be (from democrat to dictator) as they seek answers to their questions. On the other hand, with longer works such as plays or novels, I often assign each member of the class a character in a given scene or chapter. Then, I ask the students to write a paper in which they consider the events and the other characters in the scene or chapter from the point of view of their character. In class, the "characters" read their papers, answer questions from other "characters" in the scene or chapter, and respond to questions from the other students. These techniques and others have engaged all of my students in the classroom, instead of allowing many of them to sit on the sidelines as their peers participate.

When I accepted my job at Essex, I honestly didn't think that I would have much of a choice about what I taught. I assumed that developmental courses and freshman classes would be it for life. What I found instead was that not only did Essex want me to teach other courses involving my graduate training, such as American Literature I and II, but it also wanted me to help the college improve its overall offerings.

One of my specialties in graduate school was minority literature. During my second year at Essex, I was encouraged to develop "Introduction to Minority Literature" as a course that would appeal to the college's diverse student body. My course included works by African Americans, Asian Americans, Irish Americans, Jewish Americans, Italian Americans, and various other European ethnic minorities—all of whom were well represented at Essex. But I also added units on Native Americans and Hispanic Americans (especially Chicanos)—groups that are less often represented at the college.

Two of my other interests led to a class entitled "Sports in Literature and Film." I wanted a course that would attract students who would not normally take an upper-level literature course or even a general class in film. In "Sports in Literature and Film," the students read works such as *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner, The Natural, That Championship Season,* and *The Boys of Summer.* In addition, they viewed several films, including *Rocky, Breaking Away, The Jericho Mile, Chariots of Fire,* and *Pat and Mike.*

Yet another choice about what I taught involved a travel/study course. While I was at Essex, I became interested in Robert Frost. I also began to think about what a unique experience it would be to study Frost in New England with a group of Essex students, especially at the peak of fall foliage. The college's travel studies program supported me as I planned and promoted such a course.

This travel/study course began with four meetings at the college. During these sessions, I talked about Frost's life and discussed several of his poems which reflected some aspect of his life, such as "E.T." and "The Gift Outright." Then, in New England, I took the class to various spots associated with Frost's life as a poet. In Derry, New Hampshire, the students took a guided tour through his longtime home, read poems such as "Mending Wall" and "Hyla Brook" in the places that inspired them, and visited the Pinkerton Academy where Frost taught for two years and where his "The Tuft of Flowers" was first read in public. Then, in South Shaftsbury, Vermont, the class visited the Stone Cottage and read and discussed "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" where it was composed. Finally, in Ripton, Vermont, the class walked a poetry trail dedicated to Frost; toured his cabin; stopped at Bread Loaf, where the writer's conference originally associated with Frost takes place each summer; and visited with various individuals who knew Frost personally. In addition, Robert Marsh, an expert on the poet, gave the group a special lecture on Frost, and the director of Middlebury College's library conducted a tour of the library's collection of Frost memorabilia. This kind of unique educational experience is what community college teaching is all about.

Recently, like many colleges across the country, Essex has attempted to develop a general studies or core curriculum. As a result of these efforts, I have twice taught a course outside my discipline. In this course, each of the three units is devoted to a single question. In the first unit—"Where do we come from?"—students look for answers in Genesis, works by Hesiod, and African creation myths. These answers are amplified by Michaelangelo's Sistine Chapel ceiling, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and Haydn's *Creation*. Finally, these views are challenged by two scientists, Charles Darwin and Stephen Jay Gould. During the second unit—"What are we?"—students read two plays (*Oedipus Rex* and *Othello*), an epic poem (selections from *The Divine Comedy*), and a short story ("The Old Chief Mshlanga"); study ancient and modern philosophers (Plato, Aristotle, and De Beauvoir); observe examples of African art; and consider scientific observations (Jane Goodall). Finally, for the third question—"Why do we create?"—answers are sought in African and Greek epic poems, in architecture, in music and modern dance, in theoretical science, and in art. Teaching outside my discipline was daunting and exhilarating at the same time. It was also yet another teaching opportunity offered at a community college.

Along with all of these other opportunities, Essex made it possible for me to work on several special projects. Each of these projects helped keep alive for me teaching in a community college.

First, I had an idea for a series of free public programs where sports would be looked at from the perspective of the humanities. Even though external funding was not available, the college still supported my efforts. For six weeks during the fall of 1983, "The Why of Sports" used films, lectures, panel discussions, and a photography exhibit to study sports in a unique way. For instance, one panel, including players from the Negro Leagues, professional baseball players from the Jackie Robinson era, and a historian, discussed the period just before and after baseball was integrated.

Another idea for a special project came to me during one of the times that I volunteered as a judge for a statewide high school speech tournament that Essex's Speech department sponsors each fall. I felt that the English department could sponsor a similar activity for local high school students. The result of this germ of an idea was the Creative Writing Forum, a cooperative venture involving the three community colleges in Baltimore County and the Baltimore County Public Schools. Each year a featured writer is selected, and three or four students are chosen to represent each of the twenty-one high schools in Baltimore County. During the spring, the featured writer gives both a free public reading and a special reading for the students. In addition to listening to and interacting with the featured writer, the students and their creative writing teachers get to attend special workshops given by local writers and to receive signed copies of a volume by the featured writer. During the past six years the featured writers have been William Stafford, Linda Pastan, Josephine Jacobsen, Henry Taylor, Nikki Giovanni, and Sharon Olds.

A third special interest led me to become the chair of the college's Writing-Across-the-Curriculum Committee, in 1985. During the years that I have headed this committee, it has revised the College Writing Policy to make it clear that writing should be an important component of instruction in every discipline. To help make this policy a reality, the committee has sponsored various special projects. First, the committee offered programs where outside experts or faculty from within the college shared ideas about incorporating writing into instruction. Then the committee asked the English department to adopt a single handbook for the entire college. After the English department did so, every faculty member throughout the school was given a copy of the handbook to use as a reference. In addition, the committee sponsored a program where I helped individual faculty members incorporate writing-across-the-curriculum strategies into their courses, and then these individuals became mentors for other colleagues. Afterwards, I

created a special *Writing-Across-the-Curriculum Handbook* for the college. This handbook contained sections on writing to learn, to test, and to communicate. Recently, the committee has asked every department to agree on writing requirements for all entry-level courses. My work on the Writing-Across-the-Curriculum Committee has given me a chance to affect writing instruction throughout the college.

Finally, I completed a fourth special project, a textbook entitled *The Writer's Tools* (Starr, 1991). I incorporated my interests both in writing across the curriculum and in peer-group work into this developmental textbook. In this case, Essex made my work possible by giving me a sabbatical.

All of these opportunities capture what community college teaching has been like for me and what it is like for many of my colleagues. But what kind of training would prepare someone for the endless possibilities offered by community college teaching?

As I looked for a possible answer to this question, I decided to consider my own training. As an undergraduate, I was not sure if I wanted to teach secondary school immediately after graduation or if I wanted to attend graduate school. As a result, I had an experience that relatively few college professors have ever had; I took teacher-training courses for several semesters and student taught for a full semester. As I think about it today, I realize that the experiences of learning how to put together a lesson, of observing other teachers, and of having someone talk to me about what I did in class have been invaluable to me throughout my career. It is this experience that I believe should be incorporated into the graduate training of all community college teachers.

To implement these changes, all graduate programs for training community college teachers should include a three-part certification program. First, future community college teachers should take a course that considers subjects such as pedagogy, teaching styles, and learning styles. Next, they should take a seminar which involves observing a number of different professors in their discipline. (Some of these teachers might be at the university, but others should come from other colleges and community colleges in the area. These teachers should represent a variety of courses and use various teaching styles.) Each observation should be discussed in a paper and in class. Finally, each future community college teacher should student teach for a semester at a community college with a master teacher who matches the student teacher's preferred teaching style and who is recognized for his or her ability as a teacher. During the semester, the student

should observe the master teacher and then gradually take over more and more teaching responsibilities. At the end of the semester, the student should be evaluated by the master teacher, by someone from the university, and by him- or herself.

This kind of training will help prepare future community college teachers to teach instead of merely making them experts in the subject matter of a discipline. The first course will introduce them to the variety of students to be found at the community college and to the different ways that these students learn and can be taught. The second course will make all of the theory of the first course more real, with actual students, teachers, and classes. Finally, during student teaching, the individual will become a community college teacher and learn some of what that means.

What makes teaching in community colleges so exciting is that a teacher's role is dynamic, not fixed. It must be constantly adapted to reflect changes in the students and the society. Community colleges offer faculty members endless opportunities to grow, and as they do, they help redefine the role of the institution. To be ready to teach in a community college, an individual has to be willing to help redefine its role. This faculty growth is an essential element in the two-year college's distinctive position within the educational system.

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16 The Future Community College Instructor as a Business Executive

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Assessment. Accountability. These current buzzwords frequent the directives from state departments of higher education, the pages of community college journals, and the minutes from college planning meetings. Bandied about in faculty meetings and college boardrooms, these two little "A" words drive the current agendas of community colleges, often in circles. Whom should we assess? With what instruments? Who should see the results? Who is writing up our proposed assessment plan? Who is going to read and evaluate our assessment procedures? When? Where? Why? How?

The broader, more significant agenda, however, that is driving the current issues of assessment and accountability on community college campuses is the vision of community colleges as successful businesses which can rebuild American communities. Consider as evidence of this mission part of a faculty memorandum from a community college president, Robert C. Burns (1991) of NorthWest Arkansas Community College:

> . . . My belief has not changed that the student is the center of everything we do. The urgency has increased to keep the student at the heart of our institution as higher education is being challenged on accountability and greater assessment. As funds become more scarce and business/industry implement more in-house instruction/training programs, we must learn how to be more effective as educators. We must define our product and refine procedures to accomplish a truly quality institution of higher education. . . . Let's continue our dialogue on how we can consider our students as consumers while we maintain academic and training standards. Everything we think, say, hear, believe, and do should be student/customer oriented.

The Community College as Business

In this metaphoric view of education, the student is the customer and the college a business that will be assessed and held accountable if it produces a flawed product. The college-business which turns out inferior goods will also lose money because it will be unable to compete with new college-businesses which are, ironically perhaps, actual college classrooms within business establishments. By extension, the teacher must be the salesperson "refin(ing) procedures" (teaching techniques and classroom methodologies?) in order to improve business. Everything the college thinks, says, hears, believes, and does is customer focused.

Evidence that this vision of the community college as business extends beyond the campus where I teach appears in a recent *Community, Technical, and Junior College Journal* article. Entitled "Anticipating Our Future Purpose" (Lorenzo, 1991), the article redefines the "customers" of community colleges. Significantly, they are no longer students; they are "clients." Author Albert Lorenzo comments that although historically community colleges have been focused on the needs of these student-clients as individuals, this emphasis is changing. Students

> will continue to be a principal focus of our attention, but they will no longer be our exclusive focus. Community colleges will be asked to respond to the needs of two other client groups—employer and community at large. (p. 42)

The employer-client is, of course, the business world. In this refocused context, the community college becomes an extension of particular businesses who "buy" slots in particular academic programs and negotiate for a supply of "products," i.e., student graduates of the college business, to fill vacancies. In many cases, the mother company will actually bring the college-business into the company to provide "customized education," otherwise known in the trade as job-site classes (p. 43).

Let me cite one more example of the community college as business to clothe the metaphor—literally. The article "Overcoming the Polyester Image" (Regan, 1988) describes the community college in this way:

> It has had a strong position in the market for the past 25 to 30 years. Customer satisfaction is excellent. It produces a product that is both durable and attractive. It costs less than its competition without any sacrifice to quality. Although it stands alone

> successfully, it can also produce a strong result when combined with other products.
>
> Still, with significant absolute data lining up on the positive side, there is at least the perception of an image problem. Though well-satisfied with the product, customers don't often brag about buying it. (p. 49)

True to its extended business metaphor, the article then continues with ideas on how to *market* the community college so as to offset its "polyester image."

Many in higher education, and particularly those of us in the humanities, object to considering colleges as "businesses" and students as "clients." But like it or not, more and more administrators, governing boards, and state legislators insist on viewing us in this light. National accrediting agencies, as well, with their emphasis on assessment, press us to think in such terms. While we in the humanities may wish to resist the thinking that reduces students to customers and what we do to profit-motivated production of goods, we cannot deny the existence of such viewpoints.

Quality Management Can Save America

The operating theory that evolves from this extensively used business metaphor is that if the community college applies the principles of quality management and better packages and markets itself, it will be poised to rebuild American communities, promote civic responsibilities, and save the American economy. Although these may sound like impossible goals for any type of institution, the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges (AACJC) Commission on the Future of Community Colleges, a blue-ribbon panel of government and college leaders headed by Ernest Boyer of the Carnegie Foundation, thinks otherwise. After spending two years researching the issues facing community colleges, the commission published its findings in *Building Communities: A Vision for a New Century* (1988). A significant philosophical point made in this publication is the redefinition of "community." Similar to the community college's being redefined as a business, the term "community" now means not only "a region to be served but also a climate to be created" as the community college works to restore to society a sense of community. According to the commission, one way the community college will be able to rebuild American communities is by redefining a third concept—the classroom. Under this redefinition, the classroom enters the community in

various configurations, such as cooperative 2+1 programs with high schools, 2+2 programs with four-year schools, community service programs, job-site classes, and community development partnerships (McGill, 1988, p. 29). Dale Parnell (1987), former executive director of the AACJC, supports this redefined community college of the twenty-first century, believing that of all the types of American schools, the community college is the one most suited to "produce an educated citizenry as well as the most productive and competitive work force in the world" (p. 3).

If that were not enough to expect of the community colleges of the twenty-first century, many are also looking to them as sources of culture and as providers of moral and ethical development. According to Albert Lorenzo (1991), 80 percent of people in a particular community expect their community college to provide them with plays, concerts, art exhibits, and other cultural activities (p. 44). Related to this aesthetic role of the arts, there has been a renewed emphasis on humanities programs on community college campuses because the fine arts are viewed as potential sources of moral and ethical philosophy important in offsetting a "decadent" society, and as the means to "humanize" the technical curriculum and job-site "campus."

In sum, the ideal community college of the mid-1990s, poised to enter the twenty-first century successfully, is an educational business applying the principles of quality management in producing and marketing a quality product, satisfying the customer/client, redefining the concept of classroom, rebuilding the American community, saving the American economy, providing culture, and building moral and ethical character. This is a tall order with tremendous implications for all areas of American community colleges, including English departments, and for all personnel of these colleges, including English instructors.

Projected Impact on English Departments

What are the major implications of this new American community college-business for those of us who teach English? The bottom line is that we will be held responsible for the success or lack of it of our former students when they transfer into four-year programs or enter the business world. Some colleges, such as Westark Community College (Ft. Smith, Arkansas), have already developed money-back guarantees that their classes will provide the skills and knowledge needed for particular jobs or transfer programs. In addition to possessing what

are considered the traditional basic skills of reading and writing, our students must now be able to demonstrate higher-order thinking skills and a certain flexibility with ideas to perform well in the world beyond the community college. As a result, college accrediting agencies are now examining closely the general education core of community colleges to ensure that students are provided curricular opportunities to acquire these elevated basics.

Viewing a college as a business also implies that a higher attrition rate will no longer be acceptable to "upper management." An English instructor loses 25 percent of her English composition class? She will be expected to document the losses and to develop a plan for reducing the dropout rate. Already on annual self-evaluation forms, faculty at Westark Community College are asked to figure the retention percentage for their classes. In combating attrition, community college English instructors will also be involved in large-scale assessment programs of their students. Since the college-business will seek to know and to prove how much progress the students make as they work their way across and up the curriculum, the college-business will assess at every juncture. A college placement test will put students into an English instructor's classes, but the instructor will be expected to assess, as well, the students' entering writing proficiency. At the end of the semester, the instructor will repeat the assessment, perhaps in conjunction with a departmental assessment committee, and write up the results for the department chairperson. If the instructor's class is part of the developmental curriculum, then there might also be a collegewide assessment as prerequisite to entry into the "regular" curriculum. These students will also be assessed as a graduation "gift," and if their English skills have not "held up," then the instructor and his or her department will have to figure out why.

Undoubtedly, then, the English faculty in a community college in the year 2000 will spend long hours emulating the Japanese model of quality management so that the department can become a successful part of the college-business by satisfying the student-customer and turning out an exemplary product. As a by-product of these deliberations, some of the academic freedom a faculty member traditionally has had to develop a personal teaching style will give way to a certain uniformity of quality control. There will certainly be in-service retraining sessions on teaching methods theoretically successful with the diverse clientele that community colleges attract.

A major topic in this retraining will be redefining the classroom. English instructors who are by training and preference still lecturers

working within fifty-minute time frames and using overhead projectors positioned in front of rows of students will find their definition of "classroom" challenged. To help offset the attrition rate, the instructors will be taught about learning styles and told to modify the teaching environment and to accommodate students who don't learn well through lectures. The English instructors might also find part of their teaching load assigned to the college's open learning center where they will "coach" students in flex-time arrangements spanning from five minutes to five hours. An English faculty member might also find herself teaching a composition class at 11 p.m. to third-shift workers in the local plant. Her colleague may well find himself teaching world literature in four-hour time blocks on Friday nights and Saturday afternoons in the school's weekend college.

Community college instructors are used to the concept of the community as classroom, but this phrase will take on new meaning in a customer-service college-business in which the "classroom" is taken and adapted to the student-consumer.

In these future in-service retraining sessions, English faculty will also be taught even more extensively how to use collaborative learning in whatever type of classrooms they find themselves. Not only does collaborative learning address a different learning style than that appealed to through the lecture mode, but it also develops responsibility and relational skills, two of the four skill areas that experts say are crucial to develop in America's work force if the United States is to recover some of her global competitiveness and, hence, salvage her economy (Tyree, 1990, p. 43).

The other two essential skill areas are generic skills—the "elevated" basic skills mentioned earlier—and integration skills—helping students see how all areas of the curriculum fit together, how the college curriculum fits into the "real world," and how the students are all part of both a local and a global community. "Across the curriculum" is the buzz phrase, here; therefore, future community college English teachers should expect to participate in writing-across-the-curriculum programs, to develop interdisciplinary classes, and to participate as part of a faculty team in "capstone seminars" in which students in their last semester pull together all the pieces of their education and training (Tyree, 1990, p. 44).

In part because of the practical benefits that come from helping students to relate to others and to appreciate the human elements of business and technology, community college English departments are already witnessing a rebirth of the humanities. The moral and aes-

thetic benefits the public attributes to the humanities and the tendency of humanities classes to integrate knowledge will continue to stimulate enrollment in these classes. Thus, an English instructor in a community college may find that a general humanities or specific arts course will be part of her teaching load and that her humanities classroom is located in the local chamber of commerce, where a variety of people have gathered to study for personal growth and enrichment, rather than for academic transfer credit.

Implications for Future Community College English Instructors

The implications of all of these changes for someone wishing to become a community college English instructor are fairly dramatic, as a student and I discovered recently. This student, scheduled to graduate from NorthWest Arkansas Community College, wanted me to give her a blueprint of junior, senior, and graduate classes to take that would prepare her to teach English in a community college in the year 2000, or so she estimates. "Can you teach world literature on Tuesday nights in the chamber of commerce to a variety of people?" I asked.

Understandably, she replied, "What?"

So I told her a bit about the research I had been conducting for this essay and suggested we focus on knowledge and skills rather than classes, since, to my knowledge, there was no really appropriate graduate program to prepare for community college English teaching.

After some general discussion about the mission of the community college, we decided without much trouble that the English instructor in the year 2000 will need to know how to teach reading, writing, and critical thinking. In addition, she will need to be prepared to teach interdisciplinary humanities classes as well as introductory and survey literature classes, the latter a standard feature of the transfer English curriculum. To pick up the requisite classes to handle this diverse course demand, the prospective community college English teacher probably faces being in school through a Ph.D. or Ed.D. program, I told her gently.

The student was still sitting upright, even smiling, after my pronouncement, so I helped her determine that one educational plan which could provide the necessary substantive coursework would be to pursue a B.A. in English, a master's degree in humanities with

extra course work in reading, and a Ph.D. with an emphasis in composition.

"When would a future community college English instructor choose an Ed.D. over a Ph.D.?" she logically asked. I explained to her the traditional differences between the two degrees, adding that if she chose the Ph.D. over the Ed.D., which I had done to accumulate more coursework in the English discipline, then she would still need to pick up some pedagogical classes along the way. One possibility would be for her to choose a secondary education track in addition to the undergraduate English degree. Whatever approach she took to gaining information about teaching as an art, I told her, her teaching-focused classes would need to cover three general areas: developing and evaluating curriculum, developing and evaluating student assessment procedures and results, and exploring student-centered teaching methods to use in schools "without walls." Unfortunately, I added, this material goes way beyond what is generally covered in an English methods class. She would need to pick up some general classes in higher education, chosen to address these three areas.

One specific pedagogical technique that a prospective community college English instructor needs to know, I explained, is how to use groups effectively in the classroom, including collaborative learning. He also needs to understand learning styles and their implications for the English classroom; to learn to work one-on-one with students, including both tutoring and conferencing; to be shown how to integrate computers successfully into the English classroom (a skill necessitating additional coursework in word processing and computer programming); to learn to use video effectively as a teaching tool; and, most importantly and generally, to be taught to view the entire community as the "classroom." The community-as-classroom could include anything from using field trips as a teaching tool, to using computers for distance education, to preparing interactive videos, to actually developing a "traveling classroom" to take into the community—into its businesses, its youth centers, its chambers of commerce, its shopping malls, its retirement homes.

Relieved to note that the student in my office seemed energized rather than intimidated by this agenda, I broached the topic of experiences that would help prepare her to teach English in a community college. I suggested that she look for tutoring opportunities, especially a chance to train as a Laubach tutor to work individually with adults on basic reading skills. Many college campuses, I also told her, train and use student peer tutors in various areas, an opportunity she should seek out. A position in a business involving desktop publishing

or some other computer work would also be ideal for a future community college English teacher.

Even after all of this inundation, she was still in my office taking notes, so I suggested volunteer work in the community to round out her busy life (she did actually roll her eyes at this point). Community volunteer work, I explained, will develop in the future community college teacher a special sensitivity to a definition of "community," which will be, after all, her classroom of the future.

The student was silent for a minute; then she asked what personal attributes besides boundless energy and endless time are basic to a successful community college English teacher. "Flexibility," I said without hesitation, "along with well-developed people skills. A community college instructor has to be able to communicate effectively with a variety of students from 14 to 84 years old, often all in the same class. Most importantly," I smiled, "you need a dependable car equipped with a portable chalkboard."

"All of this is no small undertaking," I said to the student as she gathered up her notes to leave. "And," I added, "some of the probable features of the community college in the year 2000 are troubling, notably the potential loss of academic freedom in the name of quality control and the philosophy that learning will improve if community colleges operate like subsidiaries of Fortune 500 companies."

She stopped in the doorway. "So why become a community college English instructor instead of a university English instructor?" She is always so logical.

"Fifty-five percent of all entering college students are enrolled in two-year colleges," I told her. "From necessity, these colleges have become adept at developing a variety of programs and teaching methods to meet the needs of a diverse student body. The community colleges have their detractors, those who view this diversity as a sign of inferiority and the community college as a polyester poor sister of the four-year school. The truth is that community colleges are not cheap imitations of four-year schools, but are designed to provide a different type of education. It is this very difference that does, indeed, position the American community college to drive the needed improvements in American education and American business."

"So I get to hold you accountable for my success or failure as a community college English instructor?" the student challenged as she left my office.

"Money back guarantee only on an excellent product," I called after her. But she need not worry about the "A" words . . . at least not as a student.

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17 Renewed Vitality in the 21st Century: The Partnership between Two-Year College and University English Departments

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> The American community college movement is the most exciting development in higher education in the 20th century, and all signs point to its continuing vitality in the 21st. (Gabert, 1991, p. 7)

Datelines: 1900 through the Mid-1960s

The two-year college movement began at the turn of the twentieth century. In 1900, the University of Chicago awarded the first associate degree; and, in 1901, Joliet Junior College was founded as the first two-year college. Several university presidents—including William Rainey Harper, who was then president of the University of Chicago—viewed the two-year college as a natural extension of high school and the proper place for housing general education college courses, thereby freeing the university to teach upper-division and graduate work and to conduct research. This bifurcation of American higher education, which was initiated at the turn of the century and which has resulted in the sometimes tenuous relationship between the university and the two-year college, continues to this day and will continue well into the twenty-first century.

In the beginning of the two-year college movement, high school graduates matriculated to the two-year college as students, and their high school teachers migrated with them to teach them. Upon graduation, two-year college students then matriculated to the four-year university as students, and university M.A. graduates migrated to the two-year college as teachers. The students were generally well prepared by the two-year college for university study; ironically, their teachers were not well prepared by the university to teach in the two-year college. These early teachers came to the two-year college

with their knowledge of literature and literary theory, but with no knowledge of nontraditional students and little knowledge of how to teach composition, much less of how to teach reading, developmental English, or technical writing.

As two-year colleges began to burgeon in the early 1960s, so did the proliferation of ignorance of their well-intentioned (but ill-prepared) teachers. Gregory Cowan (1977a) was fond of telling the following story: A newly hired two-year college English department chair telephoned "long distance across five states" to ask Greg which would be the better choice for a reading list, *Oedipus Rex* or *Medea?* (p. 130). The state of knowledge wasn't much improved half a decade later when the dean of a technical college asked a job candidate, "What in your graduate training has best prepared you to teach English here?" Having just completed her master's thesis, and justifiably proud of it, the candidate began to expound on her thesis topic: "The Dominant Women in Jacobean Tragedy." [How I got that job, I'll never know. Actually, I do know: two-year colleges were desperate for English teachers.]

Datelines: The Late 1960s through the 1980s

"By and large, university English departments [remained] unaware of and uninterested in the two-year college" (Cowan, 1977a, p. 127) until well after its sixtieth anniversary. It was not until the late 1960s and early 1970s that university English departments took notice of two-year colleges and the potential for a partnership between the two. It was then that university English professors began to seek advice from their two-year college colleagues about how to teach writing to nontraditional students who were beginning to emerge in the university; about how to establish writing labs to help these students; and about how to tailor graduate programs to accommodate the needs of two-year college English teachers. But once this articulation between the university and the two-year college began, progress moved swiftly and powerfully through the 1970s:

- In 1971, "Guidelines for Junior College English Teacher Training Programs" was published by NCTE in *College Composition and Communication*. (Cowan, 1971)
- In 1974, the National Board of Graduate Education held a conference on graduate programs for two-year college teachers.
- In 1974, *Teaching English in the Two-Year College* was founded by East Carolina University.

- In 1977, *Teaching English in the Two-Year College* published the first "National Directory of Graduate Programs for Junior/Community College English Teachers." (Cowan, 1977b)
- In 1978, *Teaching English in the Two-Year College* published the second directory. (Cowan, 1978a)

The first directory described forty programs; the second, forty-three programs. The best of the graduate programs listed in the directories subscribed to the "Guidelines," which suggested the competencies and skills that would make what Mark Reynolds calls "expert generalists" (Reynolds, 1990, p. 233) well schooled in English studies, effective teachers in the two-year college classroom, and stanch advocates for English in the two-year college curriculum. To summarize, the "Guidelines" suggested that two-year college English teachers needed a foundation in three "equally significant and complementary" (Cowan, 1971, p. 306) areas:

- Linguistics and Linguistic Theory—to include the history of the language, dialectology, and grammatical systems;
- Literature and Literary Theory—to include multicultural, multiethnic, and minority literature as well as traditional literature in written, oral, and visual forms; and
- Rhetoric and Rhetorical Theory—to include composition, technical writing, and creative writing.

The two-year college English teacher also needed to be able to translate these scholarly subjects into creative teaching of the following—on all levels and in an integrated way:

- Reading—from basic literacy and simple comprehension to critical reading to literary interpretation and appreciation;
- Writing—from basic writing to advanced specialized writing;
- Speaking—from interpersonal communication to oratory;
- Listening—from literal, to interpretative, to critical, to creative; and
- Viewing—from visual literacy and simple comprehension to visual interpretation and appreciation.

The underlying assumption of the "Guidelines" was the need to make connections between the subject matter and "the students' own experiences" (Cowan, 1971, p. 306), to teach for "the good of the students," and to create "actual change in . . . students" (p. 303).

Imparting these skills to a wide variety of students with diverse educational, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds, as well as differing levels of motivation, needs, and aspirations, required the expert generalist to be familiar with and appreciative of the mission of the two-year college, its curricula, and its heterogeneous studentry. Courses from other disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, and psychology were recommended for the expert generalist's understanding not only of linguistics, literature, and rhetoric but also of the eclectic two-year college student body. Courses in adult education and the nature of the two-year college were also suitable.

Finally, the "Guidelines" stipulated that all courses in a graduate program needed to be complemented by an internship that would give prospective teachers hands-on experience in teaching their own courses under the supervision of experienced two-year college master teachers.

East Carolina University's Graduate Program for Two-Year College English Teachers was typical of programs that sprung up in the early 1970s to meet the needs of two-year college English departments.[1] The program subscribed to the "Guidelines" and was shaped by experienced and professionally active two-year college English teachers. Predicated on the premise that the first prerequisite for teaching in a two-year college is a strong academic background in traditional literature, East Carolina University designed its program as a post-M.A. certificate, which offered special courses in linguistics, nontraditional literature, and rhetoric. Following the academic courses and before the teaching internship, program participants undertook two teaching preparation courses—"Methods of Teaching English in the Two-Year College" and "Problems in Teaching College Composition"—and the participants were urged to take a third, "Developmental English in the Two-Year College." These three courses were taught by professors of English, two of whom were veteran community college teachers and one of whom was a regular consultant for community colleges.

"Methods of Teaching English in the Two-Year College" acquainted prospective teachers with the history, philosophy, and goals of the open-admissions two-year college; with the variety and types of students and courses in the two-year college; and with traditional and innovative teaching methods. There were no texts; rather, students read widely in standard works about the two-year college, in sociological studies about the nontraditional student, and in professional and pedagogical journals about the two-year college English

curriculum. Individual course units focused on the vocational, technical, and college-parallel segments of the two-year college English program and on the various courses taught within these segments—everything from remedial reading to career communication skills to college-parallel literature courses. Outstanding English instructors from community colleges were invited on a regular basis as guest lecturers to address the graduate class. In addition, each class member made a field visit to a different two-year college English department and attended at least one conference of a professional organization. Meetings such as the Southeastern Conference on English in the Two-Year College, the North Carolina–Virginia College English Association, and the North Carolina Community College Conference gave students a realistic look into the nature of two-year college teaching.

Offered along with the methods course was an in-depth course on "Problems in Teaching College Composition." This course familiarized future instructors with the scope of writing courses taught in two-year colleges—namely, basic writing, freshman composition, business and technical writing, and creative writing. A blend of theory and application, the course probed the suitability and effectiveness of textbooks, approaches, and methods by exploring the canons and the most current literature on rhetoric and applied rhetorical theory. Writing as a process was stressed throughout the course. Not only did participants study about writing, they also taught one another how to write, and, most important, they wrote—everything from freshman essays to technical reports to journalistic feature stories to creative prose and poetry.

The third teaching preparation course, "Developmental English in the Two-Year College," was strongly recommended as an elective because it investigated linguistic research and examined the practical application of that research to diagnosis and remediation of deficiencies in reading and writing. The course drew its strength from standard works in the fields of linguistics and reading and from current periodical literature.

The "Teaching Internship" was the culminating experience for participants in the program. Prospective teachers served their internships in one of several nearby two-year colleges, where for one semester they became teaching, albeit unpaid, colleagues. Interns were guided by experienced, successful two-year college master teachers and by the university supervisor. The goal of the internship was to provide interns practical, wide-ranging experience in teaching several different

courses and in assuming various related professional responsibilities, such as selecting textbooks, attending committee meetings, and designing courses. Although no two internships were exactly the same because of the many, varied facets of two-year college English programs, interns typically assumed full responsibility for teaching a nontransfer vocational or technical English course for one quarter, observed and taught three other assigned courses for two weeks each, and worked on an individual basis with developmental students in a lab setting for two weeks. Courses assigned included developmental reading, basic writing, freshman composition, business correspondence, technical writing, oral communications, and various survey and specialized literature courses.

When prospective teachers in our Two-Year College Program completed their thirty hours of academic study, their specialized teaching preparation courses, and their internship, they were not only well schooled in English studies, they were also well acquainted with the multifaceted aspects of teaching English in the two-year college and well prepared to begin their careers as classroom teachers: they were knowledgeable about their academic discipline, thoroughly versed in professional and pedagogical literature, and keenly aware of their own obligation and responsibility to contribute new knowledge to the field as practicing teacher-scholars.

Of the English graduate programs listed in the directories, Cowan (1978b) noted the "emerging professionalism [of] community college teaching—the art and the preparation, for which there is an appropriate rigorous intellectual training and an appropriate clinical, practical background" offered by some university English departments that have taken "bold steps" to confer the competencies needed by expert generalists (p. 178). We at East Carolina University like to think that Cowan was including our program in that description, and we know that he was including us when he said, "all the programs listed in this directory . . . no longer believe it is *either* teaching *or* research"; it is "an emerging fusion of teaching and research" (p. 173)—a concept we at East Carolina University stressed in our two-year college program.

Datelines: 1990 and Beyond the Year 2000

The dialogue about teaching English in the two-year college and the training of teachers continues unabated as two-year college English teachers and educators reflect on the past, present, and future:

> *Elisabeth McPherson:* [Reflecting on the early 1970s] The "Guidelines" for training two-year college English teachers "are still [as] valid today" as they were when they were written in and for the 1970s. "Two or three universities I know of did start training programs based on the 'Guidelines,' but I'm not sure any of those programs exist any more." (McPherson, 1990, p. 95)
>
> *Bertie Fearing:* [Responding] I'm not either, Elisabeth. I know that East Carolina University's program no longer exists.
>
> *Mark Reynolds:* [Questioning the future] But where "will our future faculties receive the training they need? Where, indeed, can they receive appropriate graduate-level training for teaching in the two-year college? Graduate English departments have not been responsive to the needs of two-year college faculties." (Reynolds, 1990, p. 235)
>
> *Elisabeth McPherson:* [Reflecting] "It would be nice to think the programs disappeared because the things [the "Guidelines"] called for are now requirements for all English majors: courses in the nature of language, the appreciation of dialects, the sociology or urban ghettos, the process of learning to compose." (McPherson, 1990, pp. 95–96)
>
> *Bertie Fearing:* [Responding] East Carolina University's Two-Year College Program no longer exists—not because it wasn't good or didn't meet the needs of the time—but because it has evolved and now offers those courses you mention, Elisabeth, and that training you seek for future two-year college faculty, Mark.

If East Carolina University's English department is any example, and I am encouraged to think that it is, graduate English departments now offer an updated curriculum that meets the needs of prospective two-year college expert generalists. As well as earning an M.A. and C.A.S. in traditional literature, our graduate students can now earn those degrees with a concentration in the following areas of study: literary criticism; women's literature and other special literatures; multiethnic and multicultural literature; folklore; linguistics education (TESL); rhetoric and composition; technical and professional writing; or creative writing. Students can also benefit from courses in computer instructional technology offered by the School of Technology and by the Department of Library and Information Science, and the School of Education also offers such specialized courses as the "Adult Learner" and the "Design of Multimedia Instructional Materials," as well as the more traditional courses in reading and curriculum development.

> *Bertie Fearing:* Mark, graduate English departments—and all segments in the university—will be responsive to the needs of the two-year college faculty, and here's why.

Throughout its history, the two-year college has continued to grow: from six students at Joliet Junior College in 1901, to five million students in 1,000 two-year colleges in 1990, to a projected six million students in 1,200 two-year colleges in the year 2000. The two-year college already enrolls over fifty percent of all undergraduate students in higher education (Gabert, 1991, pp. 16, 19), and that percentage will increase as more adults continue to return to the two-year college for the retraining required by our high-tech workplace and as more non-traditional and traditional undergraduate students turn to the two-year college for its bargain tuition and quality education.

Now, in contrast to increasing student enrollment is the decreasing number of two-year college faculty. Gabert estimates that by the year 2000, about 40 percent of the two-year college faculty will have retired, that the majority of the faculty in place will have been hired after 1990, and that an additional 20 percent will need to be found just to keep up with growing enrollment (p. 31).

With the growth of undergraduate enrollment in the two-year college and the decline of undergraduate enrollment in the university, the university can survive only through its transfer and graduate programs—which, notice, is the twenty-first-century version of the bifurcation of higher education that initiated the two-year college in the beginning of the twentieth century. In short, graduate English departments must be responsive to the needs of the two-year college or they will not survive.

In addition, as the two-year college grows in size, it will grow in power. Two-year college professional organizations will exert more influence in higher education; and two-year college English teachers will increasingly assume more leadership roles, heretofore held by university faculty, in such professional organizations as NCTE, CCCC, and MLA.

If the bottom line here is that the two-year college will drive the university graduate programs, the remaining two questions are (1) Where will the two-year college find new teachers for the twenty-first century? and (2) What training will these teachers need for the twenty-first century?

To answer the first question, I recommend to two-year college faculty that you look among your current students to identify and encourage those with the talent and dedication to become the two-year college English teachers of tomorrow. [What better legacy can you leave than to replace yourselves with your own students?] And when you look, seek those talented students who will reflect the gender and

the ethnicity of your student body: namely, African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, Asians, and women. According to Gabert (1991), while the two-year college enrolls proportionally the highest percentage of minorities, 90 percent of its faculty are white—fewer than five percent are black (p. 27).

Today's two-year college students are the ideal teachers for tomorrow for two reasons: (1) they already know *by experience* the diversity of students' backgrounds, needs, and aspirations; and (2) they have learned reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing as integrated processes. After they complete a college-transfer program, they should continue in a baccalaureate English education program that merges subject matter with pedagogy and a new awareness of multicultural values in language and literature. With a foundation in English education, these future teachers should complete a well-rounded graduate program that offers a broad base in English studies and specialized options in areas needed by the two-year college (e.g., technical writing, rhetoric and composition, multicultural literature, TESL).

The best graduate programs will impress on future expert generalists the need not only to be effective classroom teachers but also the need to become contributing publishing scholars *and* to be advocates for English studies in the two-year college curriculum. As Greg Cowan wrote in 1978, it's no longer teaching or research; it's both (1978b, p. 178). And it's more than sharing knowledge about the discipline *within* the discipline; it's also being a presence, a voice, an advocate for English studies *across* the two-year college curriculum. I stress the role of English advocacy because many futurists, such as Jack Fuller (1986), predict that technology will be the driving force behind the two-year college curriculum. According to Fuller, "A re-allocation of leveling resources to this end will revive cyclical pleas that the 'basics' (reading, writing, math) and the humanities not be short-changed." Our cries will be heard, Fuller predicts, "but not above the din of the new technology." Our only hope will be our "ability to adjust to the times and to weave the threads of the new technology into [our] cloth" (p. 104).

The future two-year college English teacher must integrate technology into English studies—or risk not being heard. At the same time, the future two-year college English teacher must weave the thread of interrelated English studies across the curriculum cloth of technology. Neither integration will be easy. The new technology of computers, interactive videos, hypertext, and things we have not even envisioned

yet will create problems of astronomical proportion for the English teacher, but failure to integrate English studies across the two-year college curriculum—and to risk our students' losing the power and pleasure of language—is a failure of far more significant, humanistic proportion.

It has been over twenty years since NCTE published its "Guidelines" and almost as many since Cowan did his research for the first directory. It is time for both documents to be reviewed. With their increasing power, two-year college English teachers can demand that NCTE appoint a body of two-year college English teachers and educators to reassess and, if needed, update the "Guidelines." After the "Guidelines" have been widely distributed and university graduate departments are fully apprised of them and have had time to revamp their graduate programs, if need be, *Teaching English in the Two-Year College* should once again survey graduate programs and publish an updated directory of those graduate programs particularly suited to the needs of two-year college English teachers.

Meanwhile, as two-year college English teachers, you must continue to speak up and tell the university what graduate programs and in-service workshops and institutes you need. I assure you that English graduate programs will address your needs. We will design curricula, workshops, and institutes[2] for you and offer them when and where you want them—at nights, on weekends, during summers, and even on your own campus if you but ask. Remember, we need *you* more than ever before if *we* are to survive. As a result and in conclusion, I predict that the twenty-first century will see strengthening, enriching partnerships between the two-year college and the university—and between two-year college English teachers and their university colleagues.

Notes

1. The description of East Carolina University's Graduate Program for Two-Year College English Teachers is taken largely from a monograph published by MLA (Fearing & Hester, 1981).
2. In line with NEH Summer Institutes and the Southeastern Conference on English in the Two-Year College Institute in Technical Communication, other summer programs and institutes could and should be created in subject areas of interest to two-year college English teachers. "Teaching Deconstructively," "Incorporating Multicultural and International Perspectives," and "Teaching English as a Second Language" come immediately to mind.

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18 (Re)Viewing Faculty Preservice Training and Development

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Preservice training for two-year college faculty has not been a prominent issue since the late 1960s and early 1970s, when two-year colleges almost doubled in number and hired newly minted graduates almost daily: "[F]ormal in-service training, a feature of the colleges throughout their history, peaked in the 1970s as institutional expansion subsided, and as few new staff members were employed" (Brawer, 1990, p. 50). Now, however, reports that 40 percent of all two-year college faculty will retire before the year 2000 (Commission, 1988) have created concern about how future faculty will be trained. And continued reports of fatigue and burnout among two-year college faculty have led to a renewed interest in faculty development (Seidman, 1985; Commission, 1988; McGrath & Spear, 1988, 1991; Vaughan & Palmer, 1991; Palmer & Vaughan, 1992).

The purpose of this essay is twofold: first, to review past studies concerning the preservice training and faculty development of two-year college English faculty—a knowledge of the past provides a valuable way of anticipating the future; second, to offer suggestions for the future direction of preservice training and faculty development for two-year college English faculty.[1]

Previous Studies of English Faculty

Between 1963 and 1971, the preservice training and development of two-year college faculty in English received more attention than any other two-year college academic discipline. During that period, a num-

The author expresses his gratitude to colleagues Robert Haight and Raelyn Joyce (Kalamazoo Valley Community College) and Barry Alford (Mid Michigan Community College), who offered valuable comments on various drafts of this essay.

ber of studies, sponsored by various professional, private, and governmental agencies—the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, Carnegie Corporation, Modern Language Association, National Council of Teachers of English, and the U.S. Office of Education—were published: *The Two-Year College and the Teaching of English* (Kitzhaber, 1964); *The Training and Work of California Public Junior College English Teachers* (Bossone, 1964); *English in the Two-Year College* (Weingarten & Kroeger, 1965); *Research and the Development of English Programs in the Junior College: Proceedings of the Tempe Conference 1965* (Archer & Ferrell, 1965); *The National Study of English in the Junior College* (Shugrue, 1970); and "A Study of the English Instructors in the Junior and Community Colleges" (Kent, 1971). Although the scope and breadth of these studies varied—for example, *English in the Two-Year College* surveyed 479 English faculty at 239 two-year colleges and *The National Study of English in the Junior College* surveyed over 2,700 English faculty at almost 1,000 two-year colleges—their findings and recommendations concerning the preservice training and faculty development of two-year college English instructors were quite similar.

In addition, at least one handbook-like text written for prospective and current English faculty in two-year colleges appeared, *Teaching English in the Two-Year College* (Barton & Beachner, 1970). In their preface, the authors state that the book "is a single-volume treatment of the many concerns of the teaching of English in the two-year college" (p. vi). They spend much of the book describing various teaching techniques and curricula for a variety of English courses.

Preservice Training

By the early 1960s, it was already apparent that the teaching of writing would be the main task of two-year college English faculty. In describing the two-year college English profession at that time, Elisabeth McPherson (1990) writes, "Meantime, we'd gotten a clearer notion of what it meant to teach English at a two-year college. We knew, most of us, that we were probably going to teach some kind of composition, and very little but composition, for the rest of our professional lives" (p. 93). Unfortunately, most faculty were unprepared for such a career, having been trained as traditional literature teachers and/or as elementary or secondary school teachers, and they continually expressed the need for graduate course work in the teaching of writing. *English in the Two-Year College* (Weingarten & Kroeger, 1965) reported that "many teachers wish they knew, or had known when they started

teaching, much more about teaching composition" (p. 73). One beginning English instructor stated, "I do feel . . . that my training should have included some graduate courses in the teaching of composition. . . . After a year of graduate study of literature, there is a startling jump to the teaching of freshman composition" (qtd. in Gaj, 1969, p. 3). *The National Study of English in the Junior College* (Shugrue, 1970) reported that 71 percent of faculty surveyed listed "techniques in teaching composition" as the item "most needed to improve instruction" (p. 9). Not surprisingly, then, each study found the "traditional" master's degree in English—which offered courses in literature and rarely in composition theory and which did not typically offer experience in teaching writing—inadequate preservice training for English faculty: "One certainly cannot call the typical M.A. program of most institutions with its over-emphasis upon literature realistic when one considers that a typical English assignment . . . is mainly the teaching of Remedial English and composition" (Bossone, 1964, p. 23). The studies recommended that prospective faculty complete graduate courses in composition theory and gain actual experience in teaching writing, preferably at a two-year college, perhaps through an internship. At the time, very few graduate programs, even those offering specialized degree programs or courses in teaching English in the two-year college, offered supervised teaching or internships in two-year colleges (Gaj, 1969).

Finally, the studies found current faculty unfamiliar with the philosophy, mission, and culture of the two-year college—an open-access institution with a heavy emphasis on teaching which offered both transfer and vocational courses and enrolled a diverse student population. Few faculty had attended two-year colleges as students, and few had taught previously in a two-year college (Kent, 1971). The studies recommended that prospective faculty complete a course in what *English in the Two-Year College* called "'The Teaching of English in the Two-Year College'" (Weingarten & Kroeger, 1965, p. 84). The authors of the studies believed that by completing such a course, prospective faculty would at least gain some knowledge of their philosophy, mission, and student population before beginning their teaching careers.

Since few graduate English programs at the time were prepared to train prospective two-year college English faculty, many of the studies encouraged and recommended the continued establishment of specialized graduate programs tailored to students who wanted to teach English in two-year colleges. (Gaj listed twenty-five such programs already existing in 1969). For example, *The National Study of English in the Junior College* (Shugrue, 1970) recommended that graduate English

departments "develop and coordinate with other departments within the university special graduate programs for prospective two-year college English instructors" (p. 16). In 1970, in response to such recommendations, the Conference on College Composition and Communication's (CCCC) Executive Committee authorized the preparation of guidelines for specialized graduate programs. A year later, CCCC published "Guidelines for Junior College English Teacher Training Programs" (Cowan, 1971).

Guidelines

The Guidelines Committee intended the guidelines "to serve as a checklist against which the suitability and value of training programs, both existing and proposed, can be measured" (Cowan, 1971, p. 304). They described twenty-one "attributes and abilities" that all prospective English faculty should possess, including the ability to understand the variety and skills of two-year college students, to teach communications and introductory and world literature courses, and to exhibit flexibility in pedagogical practices. They also outlined how two-year college English faculty should gain "competencies" in linguistics, literature, and rhetoric, and "skills" in areas such as writing, reading, and speaking. Finally, in support of the previous studies' recommendations, they too recommended that all graduate programs for training English faculty should include a teaching internship.

The "Guidelines" were timely, well intentioned, well received, and influenced the creation of specialized graduate programs: "In English studies we have listened carefully to Gregory Cowan and his Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) committee members, whose *Guidelines for English Teacher Training Programs* were widely discussed in 1970–1971 and have since been an essential guide in the development of graduate programs" (Green & Hellstrom, 1975, p. 98). Yet, as will be discussed later, these specialized graduate programs never flourished.

Faculty Development

While the studies concentrated on the preservice training of English faculty, they also examined faculty development.[2] As one study stated, "the lack of in-service training [was] widespread and lamentable" (Kent, 1971, p. 109). They found that current faculty felt inadequately prepared for the students and courses they were expected to teach and only vaguely aware of what it meant to be a two-year college English teacher.[3] They found that because of heavy teaching loads and large class sizes, two-year college English faculty were not professionally

active and did not have a voice in the English profession. That is, two-year college English faculty typically did not belong to professional organizations, rarely attended professional conferences, and rarely published professional writings. In addition, the studies concluded that despite being hailed as "democracy's college of this century" (Gleazer, qtd. in Weingarten & Kroeger, 1965, p. 79), two-year colleges were not fostering a climate of democracy in terms of faculty involvement in faculty development activities. The studies encouraged and recommended that two-year colleges create an environment in which faculty "participate in the governance of the college as a whole" (Shugrue, 1970, p. 13).

To improve the teaching conditions of English faculty, the studies recommended various faculty development activities, including development of in-service training programs for current English faculty that focused on instruction, specifically as it related to teaching writing. One study recommended that "departmental meetings and workshops [be] devoted to the problems involved in the teaching of English" (Bossone, 1964, p. 29). In addition, the studies recommended that English faculty be directly involved in curricular decisions concerning the English program: "The two-year college English instructor must play an active role in determining the educational goals of his [or her] institution as well as of the English program within that institution" (Shugrue, 1970, p. 13). They recommended changes in the organizational development of the two-year college in order to improve English instruction: smaller teaching loads—four courses instead of the standard five or six courses per term (Kitzhaber, 1964; Bossone, 1964; Weingarten & Kroeger, 1965; Kent, 1971); smaller class sizes—twenty to twenty-five students in each composition class rather than thirty or thirty-five (Kitzhaber, 1964; Bossone, 1964; Weingarten & Kroeger, 1965; Kent, 1971). Finally, they recommended professional development activities that would encourage English faculty to play a greater part in the English profession in higher education. They recommended that English faculty be "encourage[d] to write professionally—not on the 'publish or perish' basis—but on the basis that it is natural for them to profess in an articulate manner" (Bossone, 1964, p. 27); that English faculty "should be made aware of the importance of their membership in the major professional organizations" (Kent, 1971, p. 110). Inherent in all of the studies' recommendations was the belief that two-year colleges must establish faculty development activities which engendered a culture that empowered English faculty in their teaching, in the governance of the college, and in their professional discipline.

Looking Backward

The vantage point of a 1994 (re)view of the past studies of two-year college English faculty evokes a sense of disappointment and anger. Despite the hard work of many individuals, groups, and organizations to empower English faculty and to improve two-year college English programs through preservice training and faculty development, the culture of the two-year college remains little changed from twenty-five years ago. Many of the problems the studies identified concerning preservice training and faculty development still exist. Many of their recommendations concerning preservice training and faculty development have never been implemented.

Preservice Training

Various reasons can be given for the failure of specialized graduate programs for teaching English in two-year colleges. First, it is possible that graduate students in English desired and/or sought teaching positions in four-year colleges or universities rather than in two-year colleges (London, 1980), or they considered the two-year college English master's degree as limiting their teaching options. Second, perhaps, as undergraduates, they were discouraged from pursuing a master's degree with a specialization in English for the two-year college: "Standard English department prejudices and antagonistic colleagues can portray the two-year college graduate program as second drawer when compared to the purely literary program" (Sparrow & Fearing, 1980, p. 10). Third, just as many specialized programs began, the academic job market, especially in disciplines like English, soured. From a very practical standpoint, the dismal job market may have scared students away from a two-year college teaching career. Fourth, the growth in the field of rhetoric and composition beginning in the early 1960s (North, 1987) and "reach[ing] full flower in the years since 1975" (Berlin, 1987, p. 183) may have made specialized programs seem unnecessary to graduate students; they could complete graduate courses in rhetoric and composition theory as part of their traditional master's work and could gain experience in teaching writing while serving as a teaching assistant and/or as a part-time instructor at a two- or four-year college. Finally, the hiring practices of two-year colleges have never encouraged or required prospective faculty to hold a specialized degree. During the years of rapid growth, the traditional master's degree came to serve as the requisite degree for employment. By the time most specialized graduate programs were up

and running, two-year colleges were no longer hiring as many full-time faculty despite growing enrollments, but were increasingly using part-time faculty. Requiring a specialized master's degree as a condition for employment would have made it virtually impossible for two-year colleges to find part-time faculty.

Some graduate programs still offer specialized training for prospective two-year college English faculty, for example, master's degree programs that offer an option in teaching English in the community college, such as those at East Carolina University and Michigan State University, or the Doctor of Arts degree in English offered at universities such as Idaho State University and the University of Michigan. Rather than serving as major sources for the preservice training of English faculty, however, these programs typically serve current English faculty seeking additional training and/or an advanced degree.

Finally, at least one recent study of two-year college full- and part-time faculty suggests that faculty still remain unfamiliar with the history, mission, and literature of the two-year college (Keim, 1989). Reminiscent of past studies, this study proposes that "perhaps a formal course on the community/junior college should be a requirement for all faculty" (p. 41).

Faculty Development

With some exceptions, the faculty development model proposed by the past studies has yet to gain a hold in two-year colleges. In fact, Brawer (1990) claims that "faculty development has not become a high priority in community colleges" (p. 51). The faculty development that has occurred in two-year colleges has emphasized instructional development. The emphasis on instructional development reflects the traditional mission of the two-year college as a teaching institution and has received the support of two-year college administrators, researchers, and faculty. For example, in the first volume of *New Directions for Community Colleges—Toward a Professional Faculty*—Cohen (1973) argues that instruction should become the "central discipline" for two-year college faculty. Historically, two-year college faculty have stated a desire for faculty development which focuses on instruction. As discussed earlier, English faculty have expressed the need for additional training in the teaching of writing. More recently, a survey of two-year college faculty in Washington state found that a large majority desired faculty development that focused on teaching and learning (Seppanen, 1991). Considering the current culture in which faculty teach, the need for instructional development activities in some form is warranted. However, instructional development in its present forms

has been ineffective and has had adverse effects on the faculty culture at two-year colleges.

In *The Academic Crisis of the Community College*, McGrath and Spear (1991) argue that "the familiar staff development processes utterly disregard the sociocultural condition of the faculty" (p. 147). Rather than creating an academic culture, current faculty development has, instead, disengaged faculty from their academic disciplines and created "generic teachers" (McGrath, Spear, & Seymour, 1992). As a result of such faculty development, two-year college faculty "are pushed toward a marginality that virtually cuts them out of the academic profession" (Clark, 1987, p. 260) and, consequently, curricula become disordered, and teaching and learning are diminished (McGrath & Spear, 1991; Richardson, Fisk, & Okun, 1983).

The most recent study of two-year college English faculty revealed that faculty still typically teach five courses per semester—four writing courses and one other literature or English-related course—and slightly over one hundred students per semester—more courses and more students than recommended in the early studies or in subsequent reports by the NCTE and CCCC (Raines, 1990). English faculty in 1994 are concerned about the same issues as faculty twenty years ago: heavy teaching loads; large class sizes; successful pedagogical theories and methods for teaching a diverse population of students; and a lack of time for professional development, especially scholarship. The increasing use by two-year colleges of part-time faculty, especially in writing courses, is perhaps the one issue now addressed that was not a concern twenty years ago. In addition, two-year college English faculty are further disenfranchised by an English profession that continues to debase the field of rhetoric and composition and the teaching of writing. It is this disengagement from the academic discipline and marginalization from the larger academic community that has engendered the poor intellectual environment that the Commission on the Future of Community Colleges discovered during its study of community colleges and that has perpetuated the identity crisis that plagues English faculty.

Looking Forward

If looking backward evokes a sense of disappointment and anger, then looking forward evokes a sense of hope and optimism. Despite the current educational climate which appears unfavorable toward teachers (at all levels)—many educational reformers, in response to the current crisis in American education, suggest reforms that ignore or

weaken the authority of classroom teachers by imposing prepackaged curricula that turn teachers into technicians and assume that all students learn the same way in all classrooms (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1985)—there are events occurring that augur well for the future of preservice training and faculty development for two-year college English faculty: the publication of the Commission on the Future of Community Colleges' *Building Communities* (1988); the previously unparalleled calls for changes in the faculty culture at two-year colleges (Seidman, 1985; Vaughan, 1986, 1988; McGrath & Spear, 1991; Vaughan & Palmer, 1991); the reconsiderations of scholarship's role in higher education (Boyer, 1990; Palmer & Vaughan, 1992); and the very fact that two-year colleges have the opportunity to hire over the next eight to ten years a large number of full-time faculty. Raines (1990) found that 45 percent of current two-year college English faculty will be eligible for retirement by the year 2000.[4]

Preservice Training

Despite the failure of specialized English graduate programs to become a major source for training faculty, the competencies, skills, and teaching experience outlined in Cowan's (1971) twenty year-old "Guidelines" should not be readily dismissed. The "Guidelines" argue strongly for training that empowers teachers by teaching them, for example, to be involved in changing the academic system, to recognize the diversity of two-year college student populations, and to value the knowledge and interests that students bring to the classroom. And as the "Guidelines" suggest, faculty need a strong background in the discipline: knowledge of composition and rhetorical theory, which should include some coverage of basic writing, literacy, ESL theories, and business and technical writing. Course work in literature should include sufficient coverage that allows faculty to teach introductory literature courses through the sophomore level and should incorporate introductions to literary theory and theories of reading. This course work should, of course, reflect the latest knowledge of gender theory, multiculturalism, and canon revision, which will be evident in future textbooks. Appropriate training should also include applications of the new technologies to the teaching/learning of reading and writing, particularly computer-assisted instruction (CAI). Even the "Guidelines"' recommendation for including a teaching internship as part of preservice training should be reconsidered. Full- and part-time faculty still often begin teaching at two-year colleges without prior teaching experience at a two-year college.

Since faculty still remain unfamiliar with the mission, history, and literature of two-year colleges, a required graduate course on the topic is still necessary. At least one two-year college, Miami-Dade Community College, is beginning to require such a course. At a minimum, prospective (and current) faculty in all disciplines should be required to have read widely in the literature about two-year colleges.[5] While the preservice training described above is important for individuals seeking to teach English in a two-year college, it finally serves only a limited purpose. Ultimately, faculty development plays the most vital role in faculty careers.

Faculty Development

Faculty development activities should always be directed toward empowering faculty within the classroom, curriculum, college, and profession. As McGrath and Spear (1991; 1992) argue, however, current faculty development activities have typically disenfranchised faculty from their academic disciplines by creating "generic teachers." They suggest that "community colleges should work seriously toward constructing activities which encourage and sustain academic practices among the faculty as a collegiate body" (1991, p. 154), thereby creating an academic culture. While an academic model for faculty development should be established, two-year college faculty, especially English faculty, should not abandon the idea of membership in professional disciplines. Eighty-one percent of two-year college faculty rated the importance of their academic discipline as "very important" (Boyer, 1989, p. 117). Because they do spend a majority of their time teaching writing, two-year college English faculty have the opportunity to be an important part of the community of professional writing teachers—those who "intend to put [their] primary energy into the teaching of writing and into research that informs the teaching of writing . . ." (Hairston, 1985, p. 281). English faculty should take advantage of the symbiotic relationship between the teaching of writing and the study of writing:

> Composition studies have been and must be closely tied to the teaching of writing. Most of the researchers [surveyed] indicated that their initial contact with the theory of composition came as a result of teaching composition classes, and the enthusiasm for further research is based on the continuing challenge of writing instruction. The symbiotic relation between *teaching and research seems much more important in this field than in traditional literary studies in English.* (Chapman, 1987, 45; my emphasis)

Realistically, then, since two-year college faculty spend most of their time teaching writing, and since 93 percent of two-year faculty state that their "interest[s] lie primarily in . . . teaching" (Boyer, 1989, p. 43), faculty development activities should be organized around what Boyer (1990) calls "the scholarship of teaching" (p. 23).

An instructional model of faculty development based on "the scholarship of teaching" nurtures faculty members as classroom-based teacher-researchers. Classroom-based research by teacher-researchers empowers classroom teachers by helping them gain ownership of pedagogical theory, by increasing their involvement in curriculum development and evaluation and in institutional assessment, and by encouraging continual re-examination of teaching approaches in a quest to find those that are most effective. In addition, the classroom-based research instructional model also democratizes the classroom by changing the manner in which knowledge is constructed and by valuing the knowledge of teacher-researchers and students (Kort, 1991). A growing number of two-year and four-year scholars have argued for this model as a way to study writing (Odell, 1976; Myers, 1985; Goswami & Stillman, 1987; Daiker & Morenberg, 1990; Tinberg, 1990).

Two fine examples of classroom-based teacher research are Fleckenstein's "Inner Sight: Imagery and Emotion in Writing Engagement" (1991) and Davis's "Voices of Authority" (1992). Both Fleckenstein and Davis investigated research questions that emerged out of their own classroom teaching. Davis's research question emerged from her discovery that her own idea of a good classroom discussion differed from her students' perceptions of a good classroom discussion. Fleckenstein's research question asked, "Do writers who can create vivid mental images, visual and otherwise, experience intense emotions as they write?" (p. 212). Using tape recordings of class discussions and outside readings on the topic, Davis, with the help of her students, analyzed class discussions, investigating the role gender plays, and the various roles students and teachers play, in establishing authority in classroom discussions. Fleckenstein used both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection to investigate her research question. Both teacher-researchers used their classroom research to improve the teaching and learning in their respective classrooms. And both contributed to the larger community of scholars by sharing their classroom research at conferences and in professional journals.[6]

The role and identity of two-year college English faculty in higher education should be established primarily through a classroom-based research instructional development model based on "the scholarship of teaching." However, such a model should not be the only means for establishing the professional role and identity of two-year college Eng-

lish faculty. Professional development activities should also encourage and reward faculty who publish their writing (literary criticism, fiction, poetry, and nonfiction). If English faculty are to effectively teach writing, then they must be public writers themselves.[7]

Conclusion

Faculty development that encourages an instructional development model based on faculty as teacher-researchers reconceptualizes the faculty's role in the classroom, in the college, and in the profession. Teacher-researchers, who create and revise educational theory, who assess the effects of their own pedagogy on student learning, and who ultimately own and control the theories that underlie classroom practice, achieve new and greater authority within their classrooms, within their colleges, and within higher education. All of these outcomes, which strengthen teacher and student authority, however, run counter to the current culture in two-year colleges, and those who study and write about two-year colleges agree that changing their culture will be difficult—tradition, economics, and the place of two-year colleges in higher education all stand as barriers. But changing the current culture of two-year colleges, especially at this point in their history, is not impossible.

For the culture of the two-year colleges to change, two-year college faculty must reconceptualize their roles within the classroom, college, and profession (Kroll, 1992). Two-year college administrators must also reconceptualize the role of faculty in college governance and revise their definitions of research and scholarship. While such changes may at first seem improbable, if not revolutionary, it is heartening to note that more and more community college faculty, especially English faculty, are engaging in classroom-based research. Many college leaders, including those on the Commission on the Future of Community Colleges (1988), endorse the teacher-researcher role for faculty and support the related themes of empowering students in the classroom and of involving teacher-researchers in curriculum and program assessment. Administrators can change the current culture of two-year colleges by requiring the preservice training of faculty as described in this chapter and by implementing, encouraging, and supporting faculty development activities which involve English faculty as teacher-researchers.

As two-year college faculty face the future and confront the most diverse student population in history, and as they incorporate emerging new technologies into their teaching, and as they create innovative

and varied curricula, they have both the opportunity and the obligation to become important and significant new knowledge makers in higher education.

Notes

1. The term "English faculty" is used to refer to those two-year college faculty whose teaching primarily involves the teaching of writing. These faculty are often found in departments with names other than "English," for example, communication arts, humanities, or language arts.
2. Faculty development typically involves instructional, curricular, organizational, and professional activities.
3. McPherson's essay cited in this chapter and Betsy Hilbert's essay, "Coming of Age: Twenty Years of a Community College" (*ADE Bulletin, 79* [Winter 1984], 24–26), describe what it was like to teach English in a two-year college at this time.
4. Whether or not two-year colleges replace retiring full-time faculty with new full-time faculty remains to be seen.
5. Two-year college faculty should be familiar with two-year college studies like Ells' *The Junior College* (1931); Cohen and Brawer's *The American Community College* (1989); Brint and Karabel's *The Diverted Dream* (1989); Richardson, Fisk, and Okun's *Literacy in the Open-Access College* (1983); London's *The Culture of a Community College* (1978); Clark's *The Open Door College* (1960); Zwerling's *Second Best* (1976) and Shor's *Critical Teaching and Everyday Life* (1980).
6. For suggestions on ways two-year college faculty can become more professionally active, see Ellen Andrews Knodt, "Taming Hydra: The Problem of Balancing Teaching and Scholarship at Two-Year Colleges." *TETYC, 15* (1988): 170–174; and Keith Kroll, "Building Communities: Joining the Community of Professional Writing Teachers." *TETYC, 17* (1990): 103–108.
7. For suggestions on why, how, and what two-year English faculty can publish, see Mark Reynolds, "Writing for Professional Publication." *TETYC, 19* (1991): 290–296.

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19 Scholarship and Teaching: Crafting the Art

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Is teaching an art or a craft? There is no doubt in my mind that the truly great teacher is an artist whose challenge is to work with and shape the most difficult of all "media," the human mind. Equally, I believe that to be an outstanding teacher, one must also be a scholar.

This essay discusses the role of scholarship in the lives of community college professionals. My conclusion is that to be outstanding teaching institutions, community colleges must understand, accept, and promote scholarship. The teacher as artist must also be the teacher as scholar.

Beyond the Rhetoric

Many community college presidents and deans proudly proclaim to any and all that community colleges are teaching institutions and that their faculty members do not do research. While this statement is essentially true, it nevertheless deserves to be examined and, hopefully, put to rest, never to be uttered again by presidents addressing the Rotary clubs or anyone else, for that matter.

Why am I suggesting that community college leaders should no longer boast that community college faculty members teach and do not do research, and why should community college supporters find other ways of explaining the teaching mission of the community college? First, the message presents a distorted image of the community college professional and detracts from the debate on what should be the proper role of the community college faculty, a role I define as teacher and scholar. Second, the message is incomplete because it leads one to believe that the effective researcher and effective teacher do not coexist in one person. While the debate on the strengths and weaknesses of the researcher-teacher is one for another place and time, it

nevertheless should be acknowledged by community college professionals and placed in its proper perspective. Third, the statement implies strongly that rejecting research is a virtue for community college professionals and that their choice is to be either a researcher or a teacher, with all good and true community college faculty choosing the latter. Fourth, the statement, with its emphasis on research, shows a lack of understanding and appreciation for the broader aspects of scholarship, especially the scholarly contributions made by community college professionals. Finally, proclaiming that the community college is a teaching institution and that, therefore, its teachers and administrators do not do research ignores the role scholarship should play in the lives of community college professionals.

The Importance of Scholarship

Why is it important for faculty members to be scholars? The most important reason for community college faculty members to engage in scholarship is to improve their teaching, because community colleges are, indeed, first and foremost teaching institutions. Another important reason for emphasizing scholarship is to improve the image of the community college among members of the higher-education community, for community colleges are often not well understood by other members of the academy. As one community college faculty member notes, "The community college scholar thus struggles to disprove the common assumption that community college teachers publish less because they are less able" (Sledge, 1986, p. 10).

Adding to the confusion often surrounding the community college's mission is the location of these colleges in the educational hierarchy. Early community colleges in California and elsewhere grew out of the public school system; others came into existence as a part of higher education. Always, however, they remained in that middle ground between four-year institutions and high schools. In discussing the "in-between status" of community colleges, Linda Ching Sledge (1986), an English faculty member at Westchester Community College, notes that "community college scholars have the same image problem as their home institutions; they, too, are judged hybrid creatures whose work is only tangentially related to the world of higher education" (p. 9). In a similar vein, one of the first articles I published (Vaughan, 1988) on the role of scholarship in the community colleges was entitled "Scholarship in Community Colleges: The Path to Respect." A conclusion I reached was that teaching without scholarship is bartering infor-

mation, not engaging in those intellectual activities required of the scholar and the outstanding teacher. Sledge (1986) as well calls for community college faculty members to engage in scholarship, thereby enhancing their image among their four-year counterparts. Similarly, in an analysis of journal articles written by community college faculty members, Mark Sutherland (1989) concludes that one of the reasons community college faculty members write about their roles is to improve the image of their colleges.

Changing the Image

Community college faculty and administrators need to be more concerned with the image their colleges project as institutions of higher education and to change that image to reflect more accurately the role of the teacher as a scholar. Dennis McGrath and Martin Spear (1991), both of whom are community college faculty members, observe in their critical analysis of the community college that these colleges have broken with conventional notions of curriculum and instruction and have developed nontraditional ways of working with nontraditional students. My question is, why *shouldn't* community colleges break with conventional notions of scholarship and define scholarship in a way that is in concert with the community college mission and which enhances the faculty member's role in achieving that mission? My answer is that community colleges *should* break with tradition and *should* define scholarship on their own terms. By defining scholarship in a way that is in concert with the institutional mission, community college professionals can begin to project an image that associates them and their colleges with a community of scholars created in their own image. One community college president summarizes the advantages of creating an image of scholarship and the role the president has in creating that image: "The president and the administrators of a college, as well as the faculty, have an obligation to live professional lives that project dedication to learning and scholarship. Scholarship and teaching should be perceived as inseparable" (Parilla, 1991, p. 36). How, then, can community college faculty define scholarship in ways that are not only in concert with the community college mission but which enhance the faculty member's role in achieving the community college's mission and which improve its image among other institutions of higher education?

First, community college professionals must forget about the debate of research versus teaching, for the debate is not relevant for most and

certainly does not fit easily with attempts to define the community college mission. Next, they must forget about the near-mythical "community of scholars" whom graduate schools promote but who rarely exist in practice on any campus and who certainly do not nor should exist in traditional form on community college campuses. Third, community college faculty must reshape their notion of scholarship formed during graduate school, for most graduate schools rarely talk about any aspect of scholarship other than research (Vaughan, 1991, p. 4). Finally, and perhaps most importantly, after over a quarter of a century of redefining what constitutes higher education, community college faculty have earned the right to redefine, or more accurately define, what is meant by scholarship in the context of teaching in a community college and to create their own community of scholars based upon that definition. To summarize, community college faculty and administrators must realize that to continue to linger in a past in which scholarship as an institutional imperative is ignored is to sacrifice a future in which community colleges are vibrant educational institutions devoted to teaching and scholarship. A devotion to teaching and scholarship will help assure that faculty members gain respect and project an image that places them and their institutions squarely in the mainstream of American higher education, a position they have earned. Furthermore, as important members of the higher-education community, faculty and administrators at two-year institutions have an obligation to share their knowledge with others. Their discoveries about teaching diverse students, their innovations in curriculum, their knowledge of varied learning delivery systems, their pedagogy—these and others—need to be shared with the education community.

Scholarship Defined

James C. Palmer (1991), in calling for a broader definition of scholarship, notes that if scholarship is tied solely to research, few community college faculty members will be scholars. He suggests that by recognizing any number of intellectual activities other than original research, scholarship is placed within the reach of the majority of community college faculty. The Commission on the Future of the Community College (1988), in what is probably the first statement on the subject of scholarship issued by the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, maintains that each faculty member should be a dedicated scholar. In order for this to happen, the Commission recommends that the meaning of scholarship be broadened. Parilla

(1991), drawing upon the work of W.H. Cowley, makes a clear distinction between scholarship and research and believes that community college faculty should be concerned with scholarship and not research and that they should be especially concerned with the integration of scholarship and teaching. Finally, since 1988, I have defined scholarship in a number of my own writings (Vaughan, 1988; 1989a; 1989b; 1990; 1991).

In my earlier writings, I defined scholarship as the systematic pursuit of a topic, as an objective, rational inquiry involving critical analysis. Scholarship involves precise observation, organization, and recording of information in the search for truth and order. It is the umbrella under which research is pursued, for research is but one form of scholarship. Scholarship results in a product that is shared with others and that is subject to the criticism of individuals qualified to judge the product, whether it is a book review, an annotated bibliography, a lecture, a review of existing research on a topic, or a speech that synthesizes the thinking on a topic. Scholarship requires individuals to have a solid foundation in their professional field and to keep current with developments in that field. This definition, which was subjected to the criticism of a number of scholars both from inside and outside higher education, is one that I believe is in concert with the mission of most community colleges. As broad as it is, however, it needs to be expanded even further to include under the umbrella of scholarship such things as original musical scores presented in public concerts; art exhibits by teacher-artists; original essays and poems; scholarly articles in nonrefereed journals and in other publications not based on research; textbooks and other teaching materials; original texts designed for use with computers; interactive videos and other technologies used in teaching; and classroom research that goes beyond the current practice of assessment of student learning.

Once an institution defines scholarship in terms that are acceptable to the college community and which are in concert with the institutional mission, the institution is then ready to incorporate scholarship into the institutional culture. But before I make recommendations as to how this might be done, some observations on why it has not been done on many campuses should help to focus the debate.

Factors Militating against Scholarship in the Community College

The most important reason scholarship has not occupied a prominent place among most community college professionals is because it is not

an integral part of the institutional culture on most community college campuses. As suggested above, one of the major reasons this situation exists is that community college faculty members and administrators have failed to broaden their concept of scholarship and to define it in ways that are compatible with the community college mission and with their own roles in achieving that mission. There are, however, other factors militating against the teacher-scholar role.

Scholarship has not become an integral part of the community college culture because it has not routinely been included as a part of the rewards system. Barbara Viniar, an academic dean, and Libby Bay (1991), a humanities faculty member, recognize this failure. Scholarship, they believe "makes an integral contribution to good teaching and should be given greater recognition in promotion and tenure decisions" (p. 68). James R. Perkins (1991), viewing scholarship from the perspective of the academic dean, recommends that faculty performance be judged, in part, on the basis of scholarly contributions to the profession. McGrath and Spear (1991) believe that academic rank and formal recognition are "unlikely to be linked explicitly to scholarly accomplishments" in community colleges (p. 141). In any event, the failure to integrate scholarship into the rewards system has lessened its importance among many community college faculty members and administrators.

A third reason scholarship has failed to achieve a prominent role among community college professionals is that many presidents and academic deans fail to see it as being important. While publishing is only one facet of scholarship and no more important than other scholarly activities, according to my definition, it nevertheless is a visible symbol of individual and institutional commitment to scholarship. Both presidents and academic deans place the publishing of scholarly works very low on their own priority lists and on the lists of what they expect of those who report to them (Vaughan, 1990). It is unlikely that scholarship will ever become an important part of the community college culture until that time when presidents and academic deans see it as being an important part of what community college professionals do.

Finally, a lack of time prevents many community college faculty members from engaging in scholarly activities to the degree they would like to and to the degree that is required by the outstanding teacher. Juggling heavy teaching loads, serving on an endless number of committees that seem to meet perpetually, and meeting with students every minute one is not teaching or attending a committee meeting—all take their toll and leave teachers little time for scholarly activities. Not surprisingly, Palmer (1991) discovered that

limited time for scholarly activities is the major impediment to faculty scholarship.

Scholarship and the Future: Crafting the Art

What can be done to enhance the role of scholarship on community college campuses in the future? How can faculty and administrators work to ensure that the subject enters the debate on the community college mission and their own role in achieving that mission? And how can individual faculty members make scholarship an important part of their commitment to outstanding teaching? How, then, can one go about crafting the art of teaching?

The most obvious things that can be done to promote scholarship are those same things that are currently militating against scholarly activities: shed old notions of what constitutes scholarship and research; define scholarship in ways that meet the needs of individuals and their institutions; work to make scholarship an important part of the institutional culture, thereby projecting an image of and commitment to scholarly activities; reward scholarly activities through promotions and tenure; allow time for scholarship through released time, summer study, and sabbaticals; and have a commitment from all members of the academic community to promote, practice, and reward scholarship. Achieving these goals requires that the pieces of the puzzle be put into place before the picture of scholarship is complete. The following may help:

1. All faculty members should make scholarship, beyond the minimum required for class preparation, a part of their professional development plan. This can be done by making a professional presentation to members of the college community or at local, state, regional, and national professional meetings. Those faculty members and administrators who want to publish the results of their scholarship should agree to submit a manuscript for publication as a part of their professional development plan. Building scholarly activities into one's development plan all but assures its impact, for as professionals, the majority of community college faculty members and administrators will accomplish what they agree to accomplish.

2. Community college faculty members should rededicate themselves to their disciplines, including participating in professional associations, reading professional journals, and in some cases, contributing

to those journals. Block (1991) sees a false dichotomy between scholarship and teaching and calls for faculty members to return to their disciplines as a means of becoming effective teachers. He notes that "[c]ommunity college faculty in any discipline, from merchandising to English to sociology, are selected not only on the basis of their teaching skills but also on their currency in their respective disciplines" (p. 21). Viniar and Bay (1991) note that community college faculty are particularly vulnerable to the false dichotomy between teaching and scholarship, and that "scholarship in one's discipline remains a personal endeavor that is unrewarded by the institution" (p. 60). McGrath and Spear (1991) also refer to the need for community college faculty members to be immersed in and remain current in their disciplines.

> Faculty members who are relatively undereducated in and professionally disconnected from their disciplines, and without ongoing research interests, are unlikely to be able to represent their discipline intelligibly to nontraditional students, to interpret its intellectual structures, theoretical models, and vocabulary, to locate its concerns relative to others, and so on. (p. 145)

In summary, the faculty member's discipline must be the basis upon which scholarship rests and from which other facets of scholarship such as classroom research emanate, for it is in the discipline that resides the knowledge which permits the teacher to move beyond teacher-as-craftsman to the teacher-as-artist.

3. Individual colleges should celebrate scholarship in any number of ways. One way is to publish an internal journal devoted to faculty and administrative scholarship. Massachusetts Bay Community College's journal devoted to scholarship is one which other institutions would do well to emulate. Other colleges have annual dinners or lunches honoring the scholarly accomplishments of their faculty and staff. Johnson County Community College, in Kansas, has an annual celebration honoring three outstanding teachers and scholars at the college. Sizeable cash awards are given to those selected as outstanding teachers and scholars. The selection process includes an outside juror who makes the final selection of those who are to receive the award. The entire college participates in the awards day, with the outstanding teacher and scholar awards being only a part of the celebration. In just a few years, Johnson County Community College has made scholarship an integral part of its culture. Finally, faculty members must recognize and use any number of nontraditional avenues for scholarly publications. For example, the op-ed page o the Sunday newspaper is an excellent place for scholarly articles: Not only is the

individual faculty member or administrator rewarded by a well-reasoned piece on the op-ed page, but the institution reaps important dividends when a faculty member brings his or her expertise to bear upon an issue of the day.

Conclusion

The preceding discussion presents only a part of the picture of the role scholarship plays in the community college, for many community college faculty members are outstanding scholars. Indeed, one only has to look at the sources cited in this discussion to understand the emphasis some community college professionals place on scholarship. Nevertheless, in spite of the work being done by a number of community college professionals, if community college faculty and administrators are to gain the respect they have worked so hard to earn and which they so richly deserve, they simply must begin to place more emphasis on what it means to work in an institution of higher education—for an institution of higher education with an institutional mission devoid of scholarship is a contradiction in terms, no matter that some members of the college community are scholars. To achieve its mission as a teaching institution, the community college must make scholarship one of its top priorities, for one cannot remain an outstanding teacher without a commitment to scholarship. The result of a commitment to scholarship may give new meaning to the description of the community college as a teaching institution. Moreover, scholarship is the only craft available to those teachers who seek to become artists.

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Two-Year College English: Essays for a New Century fills a void in the scholarly work on community college teaching, curricula, faculty, programs, and history. Each of the nineteen essays explores a significant aspect of the two-year college and argues for recognition of the critical roles that such colleges now play and will continue to play well into the twenty-first century. Among the crucial topics considered are meeting the needs of diverse student populations; the demands of preparing students for access to four-year institutions; the innovative measures required to bring ethnic/cultural awareness to the classroom; the challenges presented by "older, nontraditional students"; the status of part-time instructors in a system still too-often modeled on full-time professorial faculty; and many others. Containing essays by nationally recognized scholars, educators, and authors such as Bertie Fearing, Judith Rae Davis, Barbara Stout, Smokey Wilson, George Vaughan, Jean Bolen Bridges, and Keith Kroll, *Two-Year College English* offers energetic and optimistic insights into the current and future roles that community colleges will play in the development of today's students.

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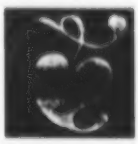

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